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The Nation.

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EDITORIAL

NO TIME TO CRY UNCLE

Bob Hope and Cardinal Spellman, who were famous for their Christmas visits to American soldiers at the front, once found themselves on the same plank stage in the Vietnamese jungle. "Nice to see you," Hope said to His Eminence. "It would hardly be a war without you!"

Apocryphal or not, that anecdote contains great historical truth, for Spellman was crucial in organizing the early commitment and promoting the escalation of U.S. military and political support for the regime of South Vietnam's Premier Ngo Dinh Diem. Last week, Spellman's successor as head of the New York archdiocese and as Catholic vicar to the Armed Forces, Archbishop John J. O'Connor, went with a delegation of American bishops to Central America on what could be a very different sort of "fact-finding mission." It included a stopover in Nicaragua for talks with President Daniel Ortega Saavedra on church-state tensions. Thus far the Archbishop, so unconstructively noisy on other fronts, appears to be seeking what he calls a "constructive resolution" of those tensions. In El Salvador the church is mediating between the government and the insurgents. Perhaps the North American branch could interpose itself between Nicaragua and Administration hawks, who have been shouting themselves hoarse about the sins of the Sandinistas. Reagan wants Nicaragua to cry uncle and surrender to his *contras*. George Shultz says the "Iron Curtain" has descended on Central America. On ABC, George Will, who is becoming something of an unofficial Administration spokesman, calls for the United States to break international law.

If luminaries of the Catholic Church like Archbishop O'Connor add their voices to a rising domestic protest, perhaps Bob Hope won't have to spend this Christmas somewhere in Nicaragua.

REAGAN DECLARES WAR
Alexander Cockburn

THE 'CONTRAS' GO PRIVATE
Jon Lee Anderson
Lucia Annunziata

CIRCUS DAYS
Edward Hoagland

BACK TO THE SIMPLE LIFE
Jackson Lears

AN AMERICAN ANTI-EPIC
Andrew Kopkind

SAFE IN THE ATOMIC WOMB

THE REAL MEANING OF STAR WARS

E.P. THOMPSON

Not even Jonathan Swift could have imagined so savage a satire on human endeavor as Star Wars. With his Strategic Defense Initiative, Ronald Reagan proposes that in some twenty-five years, after expending some hundreds of billions of dollars, American technology will emerge with an impermeable shield against antiballistic missiles.

In his March 1983 speech unveiling Star Wars, the President, in a rhetorical aside, said that when the system was perfected the United States would generously reveal all its technology to the Soviet Union so they, too, could have an impermeable shield. However, it is not yet certain that Reagan will still be President in the year 2010. He could, no doubt, circumvent the U.S. Constitution, but he might have difficulty circumventing his own.

It was generally assumed that Reagan's aside was jocular. As Theodore Draper wrote in *The New York Review of Books* for February 14, "It would be necessary to blow up the Pentagon to make its guardians give away such a priceless military treasure." (In her speech to Congress on February 20, Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher said she hoped "British scientists will share in this research." If she is counting on the "special relationship" between the United States and Britain, she has apparently forgotten her recent lesson in its one-way character—but I shall take up the reason for her abrupt volte-face on Stars Wars a little later.)

And so President Reagan has solemnly proposed that at astronomic cost, an astral venture will be set in motion to achieve an end—the

(*Continued on Page 273*)

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LETTERS.

SECRET SOPHISTRY

New York City

Having written for *The Nation* when Carey McWilliams was editor, I was until recently of the opinion that it was a rational journal open to new ideas. What changed my mind was the rather disturbed exercise in name-calling in which Aaron Latham (and Bob Woodward) indulged under the pretense of reviewing my book, *Secret Agenda* ["Mixed Nuts," Feb. 2].

Surely it must have been obvious to the editors that Latham's tirade was motivated by malice (and, I suspect, by sycophancy) rather than by a genuine interest in evaluating new evidence in the Watergate affair.

In his attack, Latham indiscriminately compares my book to books advocating conspiracy theories about the Kennedy assassination. The relevance of that comparison is obscure, however, unless he means to suggest that Watergate was *not* a conspiracy, in which case his revisionism is far more extensive than my own.

Further, when Latham implies that *Secret Agenda* is without documentation, he deliberately ignores upward of 1,000 footnotes, the testimony of more than a hundred sources and nearly 10,000 pages of formerly secret F.B.I. documents which even the Senate Select Committee on Presidential Campaign Activities was not permitted to see. The importance of that new information has been acknowledged by *The New York Times* and other publications; by pretending it does not exist, Latham does a disservice to *The Nation*'s readers.

Elsewhere, Latham complains that James McCord's former employee Lou Russell is dead and so cannot confirm the story I have told. While it is true that Russell has passed on to his reward, he was hardly the only witness to the events I have described. For example, with respect to call girls at the Columbia Plaza Apartments and Democrats at the Watergate, liaison between the two was established not by Russell but by former Washington attorney Phillip Bailley, who is alive and kicking and quoted in my book.

Two things are most obvious in Latham's review: the hatred that he and Bob Woodward feel toward me and the sophistry on which they need to rely in their effort to condemn *Secret Agenda*. This is not entirely a surprise. Woodward is a careerist whose ambitions are hopelessly entangled in the accepted version of the Watergate affair. It seems to me that *Nation* readers should have been told that Woodward's remarks were less than unbiased; among other things, *Secret Agenda* embarrasses Woodward by citing errors in his reportage. This embarrassment is compounded by quotations from an internal C.I.A. memorandum in which one of Woodward's principal sources, Robert Bennett, himself an agent of the C.I.A., brags of "feeding" stories to Woodward in an effort to steer him away from leads implicating the agency in the Watergate affair. The memo tells us that Woodward was "suitably grateful" for Bennett's help.

But what facts in my book do Woodward and Latham claim are incorrect? None. The only matter with which they appear to take factual issue concerns a statement about Woodward's Naval career. And it is here that the sophistry of these two becomes most apparent. According to Latham, "Hougan quotes a source who says Woodward 'was in Naval intelligence.'"

"But . . . 'I wasn't in Naval intelligence,' Woodward says. 'It just isn't so.'"

The reader, then, is left to conclude that I have relied on an anonymous source to make Woodward's Naval career seem more intriguing than it was. In fact, however, nothing could be further from the truth: Woodward and Latham are being disingenuous. It is they, not I, who prefer that my source should remain anonymous. As *Secret Agenda* states, it was Roger Farquahar, the first newspaper editor to give Woodward a permanent job, who expressed the opinion that Woodward had been in Naval intelligence. Farquahar told me that he based this opinion on his recollection of Woodward's résumé and on Woodward's obvious access to intelligence information. . . . Nowhere do I state that Woodward was in Naval intelligence. Rather, I make it clear that Woodward, in his capacity as a communications officer and, subsequently, as part of an elite briefing unit, was given access to intelligence information of the greatest sensitivity. Does Woodward deny that? Or does he merely wish to obscure the fact by insisting, irrelevantly, that he was not attached to the Office of Naval Intelligence per se? My suspicion is that he would prefer to obscure the issue rather than to clarify it. But if his intention is to deny that he had extraordinary access to military secrets, he would do well first to discuss the matter with his former colleagues at the Pentagon—many of whom I interviewed. *Jim Hougan*

LATHAM REPLIES

Washington

This letter is a good example of how Jim Hougan's mind works. He sees conspiracies everywhere. He even believes a negative book review must be the work of conspirators. He says Bob Woodward and I conspired to get him. That conspiracy consisted of a single telephone call. I called up Woodward and asked him if the charges Hougan makes in his book are true. That isn't conspiracy, it's reporting. I had not intended to quote Woodward in the review, but I changed my mind when he compared Hougan's book to a "turd in the soup." I felt I could not pass up such colorful—or, rather, off-colorful—language, especially since I thought he had a point. In his letter as in his book, Hougan insists on ascribing motives that are based on nothing but his vivid imagination. For instance, I don't hate Jim Hougan. I've never met him or even heard of him until now. But I did hate his silly book. *Aaron Latham*

SCOUNDREL TIME

New York City

With regard to Kai Bird and Max Holland's "Dispatches" of February 2, anyone who equates the sporadic efforts of a miserable and oppressed population to relieve the depredations of military occupation with a highly successful movement to terrorize Arabs into leaving their lands by murder, maiming and other acts of brutality (all abetted by a government bent on precisely the same goal) is a scoundrel. Even if fairness was behind the authors' bias, which it patently is not, you would expect the essential distinctions in scale and proportion to be observed. But no. "P.L.O. terrorism" is portrayed as the equal villain, in spite of facts, in spite of what even most Israelis have argued. How many more Palestinians must be massacred, tortured and deported before our brave columnists finally acknowledge the massive amount of U.S.-supported anti-Arab terrorism?

What is galling about Bird and Holland is that the rest of their item on Shin Bet terrorism makes the truth about Israeli state policy very clear. So why the pusillanimous introduction? Why, except for common cowardice, don't they stop hiding behind the ridiculous fiction of "P.L.O. terrorism" on the West Bank? *Edward W. Said*

BIRD AND HOLLAND REPLY

Washington

Edward W. Said engages in divisive semantics. Both sides use the gun, but we never equated Palestinian terrorism, a tactic born of desperation and weakness, with that of the Israelis. If we had done so, we certainly would have noted that far more Palestinian lives have been lost. It is ahistorical for Said to assert that Palestinian terrorism is fictional; he piles absurdity on hyperbole by saying that most Israelis agree with his view.

Said knows that Palestinians will never achieve their right to self-determination through terrorism. It does not help push the Palestinian movement toward nonviolent struggle when someone like Said seemingly denies the fact and consequences of the gun.

What is truly galling is Said's fierce attack on us. Why would he impose ideological rigidity on one of the few U.S. magazines to depict the Israeli-Palestinian conflict as a tragedy? Presumably, Said would have us write that which serves to dehumanize and ultimately delegitimize the Israelis.

If we are the enemy, Edward, who are your allies? *Kai Bird and Max Holland*

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CONTENTS.

Volume 240, Number 9

LETTERS
258

EDITORIALS
257 No Time to Cry Uncle
259 Clearing the Land
260 Lehman Sellout
261 Growing Up With Union Carbide — *Michael B. Gerrard*

COLUMNS
262 Beat the Devil — *Alexander Cockburn*

ARTICLES
257 Safe in the Atomic Womb: The Real Meaning of Star Wars — *E.P. Thompson*
264 The *Contras* Go Private: A Fragile Unity Is Born — *Jon Lee Anderson and Lucia Annunziata*
266 Honduras: The Uneasy Host — *Anne-Marie O'Connor*
268 Where the Carrousel Stops: Memories of Circuses Past — *Edward Hoagland*
270 Dugway Proving Ground: Test Site for Germ Warfare? — *Charles Piller*

BOOKS & THE ARTS
277 Shi: The Simple Life: Plain Living and High Thinking In American Culture — *Jackson Lears*
279 Zaroulis and Sullivan: Who Spoke Up?: American Protest Against the War in Vietnam 1963–1975 — *Maurice Isserman*
280 Films — *Andrew Kopkind*
282 Art — *Arthur C. Danto*
283 Dance — *Mindy Aloff*

Drawings by Bill Logan

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EDITORIALS.

Clearing the Land

Taking a leaf from the book of radical agricultural policies compiled by the late Joseph Stalin—dead these thirty-two years Tuesday—President Reagan has determined that small, inefficient farms will be liquidated, their inhabitants driven into urban markets or left to earn low wages on the land of others. Family life will be sacrificed and rural politics will be transformed to serve the demands of national economic development.

In postrevolutionary Russia, of course, the process was called forced collectivization. Reagan's brand, appropriately enough, is forced corporatization. More and more land will be concentrated in the hands of fewer and fewer C.E.O.s—many of whom will be permanent absentees. And what with conglomerates multiplying and mergers made easier (especially if Commerce Secretary Malcolm Baldrige repeals relevant antitrust laws), great tracts of America's farmland will soon belong to Warner Amex, say, or Pepsico. Structurally, at least, it will be hard to tell the difference between an Apple computer and an apple orchard, a dairy farm and a Dairy Queen. Can we expect McDonald's-franchised feedlots?

Reagan's vision of agricultural paradise, like the Russian fellow's, is grounded in ideology. In this case it is the cure-

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all dogma of the free market. Let prices drop, production lag, rural unemployment soar, banks fail, towns die, dust blow. In time, the market will make it right.

There are plenty of political problems with that ideology, and a serious logical flaw as well. It in no way reflects the reality of a national economy that never was and never will be free in the Reaganite sense. Farm credit is controlled by legislation, executive action and Federal Reserve policy. Farm equipment is purchased on a noncompetitive market from near-monopoly manufacturers. World sales and supplies of feed, foodstuffs and agricultural raw materials are exquisitely orchestrated for political and economic purposes. By a flip of a few switches in the world market system, for instance, the Administration could cripple the economies of Third World nations, NATO allies or assorted other consumers and suppliers of American agriculture.

Reagan is right when he says that the elaborate structure of farm price supports should be dismantled. He is not the only one saying so, either. Liberal and leftist critics have argued for a long time that the system is unfair, irrational and unable to do what it was designed for: reducing excess agricultural capacity. But neither was the vaunted free market of the 1920s able to absorb the excess production. The result was a catastrophic depression on farms throughout the decade, while business boomed in the cities. New Deal and Fair Deal programs kept some farmers from ruin (although millions more left the land), but they were full of inequities, often did not take consumers' needs into account and did not reverse the trend toward the concentration of land ownership.

The farm crisis today is exacerbated by various policies introduced by Reaganomics to serve other ends. Tight money, intended to hold down inflation, and big deficits, tolerated for the sake of tax cuts and military extravagance, have produced the credit crunch. If Reagan's farm program is implemented, farmers could default on as much as $212 billion worth of farm loans. The captains of capitalism are eager to bail out countries—Mexico, Brazil, Poland, Argentina—with only a fraction of that potentially bad debt. We hear few paeans to the free market when big banks, like Continental Illinois, or big corporations, like Chrysler, are in financial danger.

The Reagan solution looks simple, if cruel. Ridding the land of its weakest cultivators is the Administration's latest example of free-market triage, which has already been applied to the smokestack industries of the Northeast and the Midwest, to the urban service sector and to the national welfare system. As Donald Regan advised New Yorkers when he was Treasury Secretary, if you are dissatisfied with the quality of life after the ax falls on the North, move South.

Reagan's do-nothing farm policy will, in fact, do nothing to revitalize agriculture, at least not in the ways the Administration claims. Without serious and sophisticated government intervention, the problems of unemployment, overproduction, credit, soil conservation, export/import regulation and community survival cannot be addressed. The billions the government will "save" if farm programs are defunded will not, as Reagan's coterie hopes, be transferred from struggling farmers to corporate coffers. For whether they like it or not, farm subsidies, like military spending, are necessary to keep the economy grinding.

Reagan's opponents need to project their own vision of farm life and the way to secure it, beyond the myths in Hollywood's head. The Democrats should seize the present crisis and offer the farmers a better deal, including regional pricing systems, income and property tax reform, production quotas, resource and machinery cooperatives. Finding the middle way between Stalinism and Reaganism should be as easy as hitting the broadside of a barn.

Lehman Sellout

Until it was sold to Shearson/American Express last year, the investment banking firm of Lehman Brothers Kuhn Loeb was the oldest continuing partnership on Wall Street. Founded in 1850 by Henry, Emanuel and Mayer Lehman, it grew into a workhorse of corporate financing, hauling to market such new issues as Studebaker; General Cigar; Sears, Roebuck; Campbell Soup; RCA; and many other all-American brand names. The Lehmans dominated New York City's German-Jewish aristocracy, and Mayer Lehman's youngest son, Herbert, became a liberal Governor of New York and later Senator.

Over a period of ten months last year, the venerable banking house was picked clean by its top executives and partners and then sold off. Recently, Ken Auletta revealed this tale of "incompetence unmatched even in the civil service . . . vanity, avarice, cowardice, lust for power and a polluted Lehman culture," in a fascinating two-part series in *The New York Times Magazine*. Drawing on lengthy interviews with the major players, he makes the *Götterdämmerung* of Lehman Brothers sound like the ballad of "Mack the Knife."

It all started when ambitious chief executive officer Lewis L. Glucksman decided he wanted to run things and engineered the ouster of his co-C.E.O., Peter G. Peterson, who had originally elevated him to the twin throne—a move which prompted one partner to observe, "There's blood in the sea and a shark is circling and he'd [Peterson] ask the shark, 'Have you had enough to eat?'"

As the market turned bearish, as profits declined and Glucksman alienated his top people, the real feeding frenzy began, culminating in a memorable quarrel over annual bonuses. Shrieks of rage erupted when partners expecting $400,000 got only $300,000, while Glucksman's satraps profited mightily. The falling out over the yearly spoils led to a rebellion by the board and the decision to sell out. Total price: $360 million, $325 million of which was divided, unequally, among the seventy-two partners. Peterson, who had long thought of selling the company to provide for his golden years, bailed out with a golden parachute worth a gaudy $18 million. That should keep him off food stamps for a few years.

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It is doubly ironic that Lehman, which participated wholeheartedly in the mergermania of the past decade, should end up a willing takeover victim, subsumed into something called Shearson Lehman/American Express (now Shearson/Lehman Brothers). So the big sharks eat the little ones, and corporate venture capital becomes conglomerate funny money. What economic or social purposes such business bloodlettings serve is beyond us. Meanwhile, the Administration calls for further cuts in aid to the poor, and a physicians' task force reported last week that more people go hungry in America than at any time since the Great Depression.

Growing Up With Union Carbide

The coal barges chugged all night, shaking the floorboards in my childhood house on the banks of the Kanawha River. A few hundred yards away railroad tank cars hauled to market the gaseous and liquid products of the nearby chemical plants belonging to Union Carbide, Du Pont, Monsanto, FMC and others.

Charleston, West Virginia, was a little too big, affluent and diverse to be a classic company town, but there was never any doubt of its magnetic center. The chemical industry employed, directly or indirectly, the fathers of most of my friends. In grade school, during the civil defense craze of the late 1950s, we took pride in the local lore that the plants made us prime targets for Soviet bombs. When we participated in community anti-litter drives, Carbide donated thousands of Glad garbage bags. The chemical companies sponsored recreational programs, though their effluents made swimming in the Kanawha foolhardy.

Stepping outside in the morning, we would sniff to catch the prevailing chemical odor of the day. To facilitate the filing of pollution complaints, the state air pollution agency gave a "nose certification" course, which I took and which taught how to distinguish among the most common chemical stenches.

If the smell became uncommonly strong or if we heard an especially loud boom, we'd turn on the radio. Occasionally there would be a report of a serious leak or explosion. We told friends who lived closer to the plants than we did that they could stay with us if the evacuation order was ever given. When the cloud seemed headed our way, my father packed up the car and prepared to flee, though we never did. Later, when I was writing for *The Charleston Gazette* during summer vacation from college, I was dispatched to the pool hall down the street to retrieve reporters on their lunch break because there was an explosion at one of the factories. Deaths from such accidents were rare, but as the years went by, many of our families were touched by cancer. And though the doctors were never sure, we always suspected the chemicals in the air and the water.

Many of us who grew up in the shadow of the Carbide smokestacks saw our worst nightmare come true in Bhopal. Bob Wise, class of 1966 at George Washington High School in Charleston, represents the region in Congress and was interviewed on television about the Bhopal plant and its sister in Institute, near Charleston. He defended his district's biggest employer, but he looked uncomfortable. Monty Preiser, class of 1969, now an attorney in Charleston, joined with Melvin Belli in one of the first suits on behalf of the Indian victims.

As for me (class of 1968), I stayed in New York City after going to college and law school there, but I could say I owe my career to Union Carbide. The cultural gap between the hills of West Virginia and the canyons of Manhattan is enormous, but I was fascinated by the connections between the two places—one, the heart of Carbide's industrial operations; the other, its corporate headquarters, before it fled Park Avenue for the suburbs. I wrote a college thesis on air pollution and absentee ownership in West Virginia, and Carbide figured in it prominently. I bought one share of the company's stock so I could receive its shareholder mailings and keep up with its annual meetings. Eventually, I became an attorney concentrating on environmental law.

As such, I have helped companies comply with regulations, but more often I have represented people who have been injured or threatened by unsound industrial operations, highways or waste dumps. Many of my clients are citizens' organizations in small communities that are being overwhelmed by an industry, a developer or a highway builder—a rerun of my childhood.

The Chamber of Commerce types in Charleston liked to say they saw only green coming from the smokestacks. At least when I was there, environmental regulation foundered, as the economic power of Carbide and its industrial brethren eased the way for exceptions, compliance extensions and loose standards. The closer the offender to the economic base of the regulator's community, the harder it is for the regulator to be vigorous. This is especially so in a place with chronically high unemployment, like West Virginia and, on an entirely different scale, India.

That's a major reason effective environmental regulation in the United States has generally emanated (if at all) from the Federal government and not from the localities. It is also why it may be unrealistic to expect industry-starved Third World countries to establish adequate environmental and occupational safeguards.

Perhaps the parent countries of multinational companies should impose domestic standards on foreign operations. Perhaps we need a Geneva convention to set minimum standards of location, design, operation, training and inspection on foreign plants. Factories that fail to meet those standards and companies that supply them would be penalized. All over the world there are plants whose neighbors are economically outgunned and who would benefit from a new regime of international environmental protection.

MICHAEL B. GERRARD

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BEAT THE DEVIL.

Collapse of Free Press

"Reagan wants to remove the Sandinistas in Nicaragua, not oust them." This was Connie Chung on an NBC "Newsbreak" the night of Reagan's press conference, when he gave up pretending and said straightforwardly he wanted to invade. Chung's line pretty accurately sums up the relationship of the U.S. media to Reagan in these dark days. They will parrot, mostly without criticism, anything he says, however ludicrous it might be. You have to go back to the Nazis to find expressions of thuggish intent so laced with ignorance and mendacity as those made by Reagan and George Shultz in recent days. And the press is utterly complicit and utterly cowed.

The left says that in the case of an invasion of Nicaragua, it will resist. This is playing Reagan's game. For months he has been accomplishing an invasion but calling it something else. Now, after the press conference, the left should say straight out that the United States has declared war on Nicaragua and that all pledges of resistance are operational.

What Did You Do in the Cold War, Daddy?

> I sit down and draft a preposterously long telegram—some eight thousand words, if I remember correctly. . . . I wonder uneasily what the reaction will be at home. To my amazement, it is instantaneous and enthusiastic. . . . I seem to have aroused a strain of emotional and self-righteous anti-Sovietism which in later years I will wish I had not aroused.

This is George Kennan, describing in *The New Yorker* for February 25 how bad he feels about helping start the cold war. He is still vaguely surprised that the U.S. ruling elite in 1946 was not displeased to get an 8,000-word telegram urging "containment" of the Soviet threat. Now, like Adm. Hyman Rickover and William Colby and all the other reformed souls going back to Gen. Smedley ("I was a racketeer, a gangster for capitalism") Butler, Kennan says he's sorry. But he was a bad guy when it counted, and "self-righteous anti-Sovietism" has never been in better shape.

These self-righteous anti-Sovietists have a tricky moment coming up on May 8, the fortieth anniversary of the defeat of Nazism. The problem is how to avoid mentioning that the Soviet Union had more than a little to do with that defeat. The easiest way is to do just that—avoid it. The way the fortieth anniversary of the Yalta agreement was handled in the press and on TV a few weeks ago is a pretty good guide to what will happen in May. The burden of this commentary was basically that the meeting between Roosevelt, Churchill and Stalin was one in which a trusting Roosevelt, over the protests of Churchill, was duped by Stalin into ratifying the enslavement of millions.

This absurd thesis has always been advanced by the merchants of rollback, but it's being advocated with more than usual intensity by those who contend that all arms-control negotiations with the Soviet Union are a mistake. "Look on Yalta," they say, "and beware."

There seems to be considerable ignorance about what actually happened at Yalta. In *The Wall Street Journal* for February 7, the erratic oligomath Paul Johnson—the only man I know with clenched hair—wrote, "At Yalta the Western powers agreed (at Stalin's request) to deliver their devastating double air strike on Dresden, Germany, precisely to encourage the Soviet armored thrusts." As a matter of fact, Stalin took the sensible view that bombing was of little military utility ("Bombs and rockets rarely find their target," as he put it) and would scarcely have been militarily "encouraged" by the terror-bombing of the hundreds of thousands of refugees who were crammed into Dresden when the Allied planes struck, or by the U.S. Mustangs that returned the following day to machine-gun the fugitive survivors. The Americans and the British bombed Dresden to demonstrate to the Russians, who were bearing the brunt of the fighting, what would now be called by the Reagan gang "resolve" and "will."

On *NBC Nightly News* for February 4, Tom Brokaw announced that in the view of "critics," the agreement at Yalta was a "brutal division that gave Joseph Stalin and the Russians an advantage they could never have won on their own." That was an odd way of putting it. The truth is that the Russians had fought the Germans back through Eastern Europe and thus had won an advantage entirely on their own.

Brokaw then introduced Garrick Utley, who announced that he was "here in Torgau, on the banks of the Elbe." Forty years ago, Utley said, Europe was divided by the superpowers, and "the people of Torgau had no voice in that." Considering that the people of Torgau had been led up to then by Hitler and had suffered the misfortune of being on the losing side, this was scarcely surprising.

The notion that Stalin behaved in a beastly fashion to the Germans was also suggested by a February 8 news story in *The Wall Street Journal*: "After World War II Stalin politically terrorized and economically exploited Eastern Europe, especially East Germany. Whole factories were disassembled and sent back to the Soviet Union." What did they expect, goodwill visits from the Bolshoi? Germany had just claimed at least 20 million Russian lives. The shipment of factories, reparations agreed to by the Allies, seems a rather genteel penalty, and perhaps in better taste than the West's idea, which was to ship Nazi war criminals in good working order—not even disassembled—to safety in the United States or Latin America.

"By agreeing to divide a defeated Germany" at Yalta, Utley said, "the deed was done." The problem here is that they didn't agree to divide Germany at Yalta. There were zones of military occupation. Formal division came much later. Gen. Lucius Clay's decision to institute a separate currency in West Germany in 1948 and the establishment of the Federal Republic of Germany the following year are more relevant than what Utley imagines happened at Yalta.

Roosevelt was no dupe bamboozled, despite Churchill's efforts, by Stalin. He saw the Yalta agreement as a realistic

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acknowledgment of postwar spheres of influence in which the United States did very well, the British less well and in which Soviet hegemony in Eastern Europe was duly recognized. The Western allies came out of Yalta justifiably pleased with the results, which included the Soviet Union's agreement to enter the war against Japan and thus deal with the near-million-strong Kwantung Army in Manchuria. The idea that Roosevelt and Churchill had a profound interest in democracy, in contrast to Stalin's brutish designs, is grotesque, as a scrutiny of their efforts to save the pro-fascist monarchies of Italy and Greece speedily attests.

The founding of the United Nations was also settled at Yalta, but Brokaw, Utley and Johnson did not mention the fact. It is not fashionable in the American media to say anything civil about the United Nations.

It's hard to know what the denouncers of Yalta would prefer to have happened. If you start by refusing to accept that the Soviet Union bore the brunt of the fighting, and was mainly responsible for the defeat of fascism, then you end by ignoring the realities of the war and prating nonsense about "betrayal" and Roosevelt's "innocence" at Yalta, as if Churchill had not already accepted those realities a year earlier in Moscow in the famous agreement with Stalin on spheres of influence. Of course, many in the Reagan gang agree with West German Chancellor Helmut Kohl that the best way to remember Yalta in 1985 is to encourage Silesian Germans to recover the "lost territories" in Poland and that the way to arouse the masses in Eastern Europe is to transmit anti-Semitic broadcasts, as Radio Liberty has been doing with such zest.

That's Show Business

Dr. William C. DeVries, the heart switcher, is complaining about all the coverage. He says that some candidates for artificial hearts have backed out of the operation—have chosen to die, that is—rather than face the publicity. But even though William Schroeder and Murray Haydon may chafe, they can't do much about it because publicity is exactly what Humana, the health-care conglomerate backing DeVries, is looking for. Last year Humana had profits of $193 million on revenues of $2.6 billion and had a successful bond offering of $200 million in August. There are so many transmission satellite dishes outside the Humana Louisville hospital that it looks like the Pentagon roof.

Meanwhile, the National Center for Health Statistics reported that the nation's death rate has dropped to a record low and that Americans can expect to live longer than ever. On February 12 *The New York Times* ran an Associated Press story about the 1982 mortality statistics, headed "Life Expectancy at New U.S. High." The A.P. story was pretty upbeat, and you had to read carefully the ninth paragraph—beginning with the news that infant mortality (deaths within the first year) in the United States is at an all-time low—to see that although the rate of mortality for white infants dropped 4 percent from 1981, the rate for black babies went up 2 percent, to 20 deaths per 1,000 live births, almost exactly double the rate for white children.

So if the editor at *The Times* had cared to class-angle his headline, it could have read, "Reagan Bad for Black Babies." He could have rewritten the lead to say:

> Figures released today by the National Center for Health Statistics dramatically highlighted the bitter impact on the poor of two years of Reagan cutbacks in social spending. Malnutrition and inadequate health care are taking a toll on the most defenseless members of society, poor black mothers and their embryos.

That's Reaganism for you: let the embryo come to term and then allow the magic of the free market to do it in with a supply-side postpartum abortion.

Who says the newspapers report only the bad news? On February 24, *The Times* ran a story on its front page headed "Decline Slowing for Death Rate of U.S. Infants," by Robert Pear. The lead was fairly decorous, announcing, "Federal officials say they are concerned about a slowdown of the nation's infant mortality rate." Pear went on to report that government health officials are worried because the once-steady decline in infant mortality, which fell from 24.7 deaths per 1,000 live births in 1965 to slightly less than 11 deaths per 1,000 in 1983, is "stabilizing." We had to wait until the twenty-fourth paragraph of a thirty-three paragraph story to get the rate for black infants—19.6 per 1,000 this time—but Pear did quote the Public Health Service as reporting that though infant mortality in the first month of life is still declining, it is increasing for infants in the next eleven months.

The difference between white and black infant mortality rates is the same now as it was in 1962, before the establishment of Medicaid and other social reforms. The Reagan Administration has cut Medicaid and nutrition and health programs for mothers and infants. Federal officials pronounce themselves baffled by the slowdown and are thinking of calling in Sherlock Holmes. Pear took care to note, "No one has proved that the cutbacks led to additional infant mortality."

There you have it, the Reagan revolution: rising black infant mortality, rising teen-age suicide and an economy acknowledged to be "booming" by the media although the unemployment rate exceeds 7 percent. When cold war demographers thought they had detected an increase in Soviet infant mortality in the late 1970s, there was a rash of articles deducing from this the failure of the Soviet system. Considering that this is budget time and the Reagan Administration is planning to kill a whole lot more infants, a naïve observer might think that there would be more of a commotion about this baby murder. The sophisticated observer knows that Reagan, along with most newspaper editors and TV producers, isn't too unhappy about rising black infant mortality. Not *really* unhappy, the way they are about Lockheed's cost overruns on toilet seats to be used by U.S. troops invading Nicaragua or about the possible collapse of the Anzus alliance. Get them off the welfare rolls and into the mortuaries.

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ARTICLES.

THE *CONTRAS* GO PRIVATE

A Fragile Unity Is Born

Sometime this month, Congress will vote on whether to release $14 million in aid to the Nicaraguan rebels, whom President Reagan called "our brothers" in a radio speech on February 16. The following report takes an inside look at these "freedom fighters" and assesses their policies and prospects with or without additional U.S. aid. In a companion article, Anne-Marie O'Connor reports on the disruptive role the contras *based in Honduras have been playing.*

—The Editors

JON LEE ANDERSON AND LUCIA ANNUNZIATA

It was a comparatively staid gathering on a large patio. The men were dressed in dark suits; the few women present wore expensive dresses and numerous gold rings that glinted when they gestured. When they asked questions, they prefaced them with a ceremonious "*Por favor, Don Arturo.*" They might have been Latin American suburbanites gathered for a lecture on Mozart or current affairs but for the group of hard-looking men in bright acrylic jackets standing at the entrance, the rumbling noise of idling car engines outside and the aggressive young woman telling people, "No tape recorders."

This was a secret meeting of the top opposition leaders, held on November 30 to celebrate the unification of nearly all the anti-Sandinista factions. The host was Eduardo Uli Barri, editor of *La Nacion*, Costa Rica's most influential daily. Among those present were Adolfo Calero Portocarrero, leader of the Nicaraguan Democratic Force (F.D.N.), the Honduras-based guerrilla force which is made up largely of former members of Gen. Anastasio Somoza's National Guard; Alfonso Robelo, a social democrat and former leader of ARDE, the Costa Rica-based group of "pure" revolutionaries founded and led by Edén Pastora Gómez, "Commander Zero" of the Sandinista revolution; Alfredo César, leader of a group that has quarreled with the others; Arturo Cruz, would-be Nicaraguan presidential candidate representing the Coordinadora Democratica; and César Pedro Joaquín Chamorro Jr., then the editor of *La Prensa*, Nicaragua's main antigovernment newspaper (in December, Chamorro went into exile, complaining about censorship). Only Pastora was missing, but Calero sent him regards.

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The Reagan Administration had long been pushing for unification of the *contra* movement; ironically, it came as a result of Congress's decision, last May, to suspend further aid to the anti-Sandinistas. Far from destroying the *contras*, the move forced them to stop their squabbling, to unify their military effort and to seek financial help from sympathizers abroad. "In some ways the aid cutoff was the best thing that could have happened to us," a *contra* intelligence officer told us in Tegucigalpa recently. "Need has forced us to do things that weren't possible before." After the money stopped, the rebels underwent a transformation toward greater autonomy. The November gathering was an important stage in that metamorphosis.

In recent months the *contras* have tapped a steady reservoir of aid from private sources in the United States and in a half-dozen Latin American and European countries. In the United States they struck gold—an impressive network of conservative business, political and religious interest groups, private citizens and ripe-for-plucking pro-Reagan patriots with spare dollars to give to a worthy cause. The money flows through the F.D.N.'s fund-raising offices located in major U.S. cities and bearing innocuous-sounding names like the Human Development Fund. Most of the private assistance is apparently channeled through the Alabama-based paramilitary Civilian Military Assistance (C.M.A.), which also sends teams to Central America to train the *contras*.

The leaders of the U.S. private aid campaign have joined forces under Gen. John Singlaub, retired, former commander of U.S. forces in South Korea and of the Joint Unconventional Warfare Task Force in Vietnam, which was involved in the controversial Phoenix program. Singlaub and some of the other top people in the aid organizations are listed on the letterheads of a gaggle of right-wing policy groups, some set up specifically to help the *contras* and other "anticommunist" guerrilla groups. The general also heads the World Anti-Communist League and the United States Council for World Freedom. The council and a number of others with which Singlaub is linked are coordinating the pro-*contra* effort.

A member of one of the groups told us, "Our fund-raising efforts have paid off best with people who used to work in the government who are now in corporations with defense contracts." An example is Gen. Daniel Graham, retired, former director of the Defense Intelligence Agency and now chair of a company promoting Star Wars technology, who serves on many boards. The forces of the New Right have intensified their efforts to whip up support for the rebels. At the World Anti-Communist League's annual conference in San Diego last September, Nicaragua was high on the agenda, and members resolved to make Central America a major focus of their efforts in the coming year.

Last summer another series of seminars was held in the Washington area by Causa, the propaganda and political arm of the Rev. Sun Myung Moon's Unification Church.

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The event gave birth to a pro-*contra* organization called the American Nicaraguan Association (A.N.A.) which, according to a prominent Washington lobbyist who represents right-wing groups, will "preach the evils of communism in Nicaragua to the people of the United States" and raise funds for the "freedom fighters."

Prior to the seminars Causa had never publicized its ties to the *contras*, although *contra* leader Fernando (El Negro) Chamorro says it approached him in 1982. Causa has also quietly helped Misura, the rebel army of Miskito Indians based in Honduras and backed by the Central Intelligence Agency until the cutoff. The aid has ranged from cash donations for Misura's political officers to airlifts of food and clothing.

At least one anti-Sandinista leader has availed himself of A.N.A.'s services. Alfonso Robelo, who until recently was ARDE's political chief, left Central America last December to dedicate himself to "political activity abroad." His purpose, he said at that time, was "to open the eyes of those who don't know of the Soviet threat in Nicaragua. This will take place in the U.S., Europe and Latin America." Robelo said that A.N.A. would coordinate his activities.

The C.M.A. was important to the *contras* even before the last official aid reached the F.D.N. last fall, and it has become increasingly so. The group has expanded, capitalizing on the publicity surrounding the death of two of its members when the C.I.A. helicopter in which they were flying was shot down by Sandinista gunners. Chapters have sprung up across the United States; members hold numerous fundraisers and send badly needed supplies to the rebels. Its chief, Tom Posey, allegedly offered the *contras* a combat-ready George Patton Brigade made up of 3,000 American volunteers. Calero explained that such a force would not violate the U.S. Neutrality Act: volunteers would arrive armed only with cash, which they would hand over to the *contras*, who would then purchase arms for them on the international black market.

News of the proposed brigade was leaked by the F.D.N., with an eye to the upcoming debate in Congress on renewed funding for the covert war. It hoped that the specter of several thousand American volunteers fighting, killing and dying in Nicaragua would cause the legislators to reconsider their distaste for the C.I.A.'s more controlled effort. "For now we're holding them [the C.M.A.] back," Calero said in December. In mid-February, an F.D.N. logistics officer said of the C.M.A. volunteers, "Whenever they want to come they're welcome." However, one Western intelligence officer in Central America said he has tried to "discourage" C.M.A. volunteers from coming.

Nevertheless, the C.M.A. has taken over many of the functions previously performed for the *contras* by the C.I.A., including providing trainers and advisers and maintaining a logistic pipeline. The C.M.A. is also expanding its operations to Costa Rica. Sources there say that on a recent visit to the country, Posey offered to send advisers, who would help form a new rebel group composed mostly of ARDE defectors and deserters. That force would also recruit Pastora's deserters and followers of Alfonso Robelo and Fernando Chamorro.

The rebel factions recognized that unification could solve their financial worries as well as their strategic weaknesses. "The lack of a coalition of forces was a major stumbling block to a consistent supply of aid and recognition from abroad," a *contra* commander told us. "We need a coordinated northern and southern front," said F.D.N. military commander-in-chief Enrique Bermúdez. Of course, the C.I.A. had continually urged the *contras* to unite.

The need for money brought together a variegated coalition of groups, but the plum was ARDE commander Edén Pastora, who secretly entered into a tentative military alliance with the F.D.N. Sources close to F.D.N. chief Calero say that although Pastora continues to denounce the F.D.N. publicly for the large number of former National Guardsmen in its ranks, he agreed to coordinate his force's tactical operations with those of the Honduras-based group. If this agreement holds, sources say, Pastora's fighters will receive arms from the better-equipped force. In return, Pastora won't oppose the creation of an F.D.N. "southern

DRAWINGS BY BILL LOGAN

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front" force, which will operate from an area alongside his bases on the Costa Rican border with Nicaragua. The arrangement is similar to the relationship the ARDE leader had with the C.I.A. between May 1982 and May 1984, under which his fighters received material and financial support. "It was understood that Pastora would continue to denounce the C.I.A. even after it began helping him. In fact, the Company told him he should," one source explained. Both factions are hinting publicly that they have buried their differences in order to unite against the common enemy. As a conciliatory gesture Pastora's aides have stopped criticizing the F.D.N. for recruiting Somocistas; they admit that some former National Guardsmen, albeit "rehabilitated" ones, are serving with ARDE. For his part, Calero has praised Pastora as a major figure in the Nicaraguan opposition. Even F.D.N. fighters toe the new line on Pastora, who had been regularly reviled by Bermúdez in the past. "We have to recognize that he no longer is what he once was," says task force leader Freddy Espinoza.

Pastora's newfound support in the hawkish Cuban exile community of Miami may partially explain his more conservative rhetoric of late and his rapprochement with the F.D.N. On a fund-raising trip to South Florida last November he netted more than $2 million in cash and supplies. The affluent Cuban exiles have taken up the *contra* cause as a means of striking back at their archenemy Fidel

Honduras: The Uneasy Host

Tegucigalpa, Honduras

Allegations by the Honduran Army that C.I.A.-trained Nicaraguan rebels have been involved in political assassinations and kidnappings here are symptomatic of this country's growing reluctance to continue as the base for the war against Nicaragua. Honduran civilian and military leaders argue that a permanent cutoff of U.S. aid to the *contras* could make Honduras a sanctuary for thousands of combat-tested guerrillas, who, instead of fighting the Sandinistas, would degenerate into well-armed bands of outlaws, robbing and killing to survive.

In addition, the *contras*, whom military leaders here consider incapable of winning any major strategic battles, have come to symbolize what Hondurans regard as the Reagan Administration's wishy-washy policy toward the Sandinista government. Honduras's military leadership fears it is taking a great risk by acting as the Administration's chief partner in military and intelligence activities in Central America and wants a stronger commitment from Washington—specifically, a bilateral defense treaty and increased military and economic aid.

The allegation that more than eighteen Hondurans and an unknown number of Salvadorans and Nicaraguans were killed or kidnapped by the rebels was leaked to reporters at the end of December by army officers, on the heels of a military report that blamed much of the political violence here in past years on foreigners.

That report was the result of a seven-month internal investigation by the army into disappearances of Honduran leftists since 1980. Human rights activists charged that many of the abuses were committed by members of the security forces during a crackdown on opposition figures and that the report was an attempt to shift the blame to the *contras*.

As for the *contras*' alleged victims, Honduran Army officers say that many of them were suspected of being involved in arms trafficking to the antigovernment forces in El Salvador. Choluteca, a province strategically located between Nicaragua and El Salvador, was the focus of much of the arms interdiction activity by both *contras* and Honduran security forces in 1982 and 1983. It was during that period that the crackdown on opposition figures occurred, residents of the area say. An official involved with the interdiction program said that the Central Intelligence Agency depended on the Nicaraguan guerrillas to provide information on arms trafficking to the Salvadoran rebels. Although he declined to give details of the *contras*' activities, he said that U.S. officials often became frustrated because people detained for arms trafficking by Honduran officers sometimes disappeared before they could be questioned by Honduran intelligence officers and their U.S. advisers. "We would even have accepted guys who had been worked over," he said. Honduran Army officers told him that the suspects "were never captured alive."

In late 1983, the source said, a regional military commander in Choluteca detained three Nicaraguans suspected of trafficking arms, "and then, they disappeared." In April 1983, two Nicaraguans were killed by unknown persons while trying to pass into El Salvador with a column of guerrilla supporters.

He said that U.S. officials did not intervene to discourage human rights abuses because they wanted to maintain distance from the interdiction program and therefore lacked hard evidence. However, representatives here from the United States have given little indication that they are eager to protest human rights abuses. Last spring, Honduras's leading leftist labor leader, Roland Vindel, was picked up by Public Security Forces, according to his family. Although the reason for the arrest was not announced, Vindel had been engaged in tense wage negotiations with the management of the state electricity commission at the time. He had been suspected by security forces of having links with Honduran and Salvadoran armed leftists. Several days after the abduction, a U.S. Embassy official, asked if the United States would pressure the Honduran government to release Vindel, said, "He was an unsavory character, a communist.

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Castro; Pastora and the more ideologically attuned Calero have skillfully played on their hopes and fears.

But the move toward an alliance between Calero and Pastora is not based merely on a mutual need for money. It is also a result of an internal struggle among the *contra* factions, one which goes on despite the celebrations of unity. Indeed, in late February Pastora was still flailing at the F.D.N., publicly and privately. Even now, some *contras* fear that the renegade Sandinista might back out of a *contra* "merger." Recently, social democrat Robelo founded a socialist *contra* group, whose members include former *La Prensa* editor Chamorro. The group is intended to provide an ideological counterweight to the F.D.N.'s dominance, and Robelo will seek support from outside "democratic groups" including the Socialist International. Allegedly, he has already received money from some Latin American countries and private individuals in Europe. It is said that Calero was fearful that Robelo would conspire against him and forged the alliance with Pastora in order to play him off against Robelo.

In a recent interview at his home in Costa Rica, Robelo dismissed the conspiracy charge and attributed it to "rumors originated by the Sandinistas." But he admitted that there was a secret meeting on November 13, attended by eighteen people. They "decided to meet in order to find the way to unify the deeply divided southern front," he said.

The labor leader has not been seen since.

Under Gen. Gustavo Alvarez Martínez, a staunch anti-communist who was ousted in a barracks coup last March, the *contras* were given free rein in Honduras and worked with army intelligence officers investigating leftists. Reportedly, some of the *contras* were even allowed to wear Honduran Army uniforms in border areas. The current leadership, under Brig. Gen. Walter López Reyes, is hostile to the rebels. As soon as he took power, López, a supporter of U.S. policy but also a nationalist, advised them to lower their profile.

Part of the anti-*contra* sentiment originated with a group of younger officers who believe that eventually Honduras will have to coexist with Nicaragua and that supporting the *contras* merely gives the Sandinistas an excuse to increase the size of their army. López's antipathy toward the *contras* stems from their links to the Honduran Special Investigation Staff, a crack intelligence unit created as part of the arms interdiction effort, whose leaders reported directly to Alvarez. Human rights groups blame the unit for some of the political violence that occurred between 1980 and 1984. López dissolved the unit after the coup, fearing it might act as an intelligence network hostile to his consolidation of power.

Human rights activists were infuriated by the preliminary conclusions of the army's report on disappearances and at first dismissed the allegation of *contra* involvement as an attempt to whitewash official abuses. Now, Ramón Custodio, head of the Honduran Human Rights Commission, has begun to investigate the possibility that the *contras* are to blame for some of the violence. He told me that recently he was threatened and accused of being a communist by a *contra* officer. "The army had to have had knowledge of this," he added.

Raúl Sandoval, a union activist forced to move to Tegucigalpa from Choluteca province during the crackdown on opposition figures there, said that in late 1981, members of a group called the Honduran Anti-Communist Movement (MACHO), which was composed of *contras* and Hondurans, threatened local opposition figures.

"Choluteca was filled with *contras* then," he said. "They accused us of being communists or Sandinista spies." Sandoval said that in June 1982, union activist Saul Godínez was abducted by Nicaraguan rebels. In April 1983, the bullet-riddled body of teachers' union leader César Augusto Cadalso Dávila was found on the side of a highway near El Triunfo, in Choluteca.

The Human Rights Commission blamed the *contras* for that killing, since Cadalso had received repeated death threats from the *contras* and had moved from El Triunfo several months before he was killed, after unknown attackers with automatic weapons sprayed his house with gunfire. But Cadalso had also complained to his friends that local security forces had accompanied the *contras*, leaving it unclear who is responsible for his death.

The number of systematic human rights abuses against leftists or suspected suppliers of arms to Salvadoran insurgents has dropped considerably since López took power. But people living in towns along the border with Nicaragua are afraid. In San Marcos de Colon, which is near several rebel camps, two peasants were killed by *contras* last December. "We are afraid," one resident told me. "It is very dangerous to speak out against the *contras*. It is better to keep your mouth shut."

In negotiations under way with Washington, López has proposed that most of the rebel forces in Honduras be moved to Nicaragua, but the United States has treated the idea coolly. National security adviser Robert McFarlane said in a January meeting in Tegucigalpa that money to support the *contra* units would be found "somewhere."

Diplomatic observers here note that the Honduran Army continues to give logistical support to the rebels and doubt that the cooperation will end, despite the rising criticism. They point out that Honduras received $246.2 million in economic and military assistance in 1984 and that it regards its fortunes as too closely tied to Washington to resign as the United States' major ally in the region.

ANNE-MARIE O'CONNOR

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"Some were socialists, but there were also people from the private sector." He didn't deny that he was interested in winning the support of the Socialist International. "We need to work very hard in order to open their eyes," he said. He talked freely about the support he received from one European government and from private citizens in France and in Spain. He claimed to have met with an adviser of Bettino Craxi, Italy's Socialist Prime Minister, and to have received help from four Latin American governments. He described how private aid works: "You talk with members of government and they say, 'We want to help you, but we can't officially. So here is $20,000 from my private account.'"

The rivalry between Calero and Robelo raises another question about the *contras*: how united are they? In the past few months, all the *contra* factions have gone through hard times. Last November, Edgar Chamorro, a former spokesman for the F.D.N., was dismissed by his own group after he criticized the C.I.A.'s handbook for guerrillas and stated the United States was preparing to abandon the *contras*. He is not alone in that fear: in recent months many *contras* have been predicting "another Bay of Pigs."

They have suffered some major defeats in the field. There have also been defections. Recently, commander Hugo Villagra, a former captain in the National Guard and one of the original *contras*, flew to Miami after denouncing increasing corruption and feuding in the F.D.N. Lack of money has hurt some units, particularly ARDE, which was unable to feed hundreds of its fighters when the C.I.A. money stopped coming. All the factions have lost many valuable men who deserted rather than go hungry. Last October Brooklyn Rivera, leader of the Indian Misurasata Organization, decided to enter negotiations with the Sandinistas. But his decision caused a schism in his group when at least four of his field officers refused to support the move, and the negotiations have been suspended indefinitely since mid-January.

Behind the newly erected facade of unity, there is rivalry and uncertainty. The cutoff of aid has fostered strong anti-U.S. feelings, but instead of breaking the *contras'* morale, it has pushed many of them toward greater independence from the U.S. government.

A U.S. Army officer summed it all up recently in Tegucigalpa: "Some of the *contras* will go back silently to their hometowns, and the Sandinistas won't say a word. Some of them will go to Honduras and Miami. But a hard core will continue to fight because they have enough training and enough money—and they are too compromised to go back." One of the young commanders who split from Rivera over negotiations with the Sandinistas said, "If the ammunition runs out we'll return to the bow and arrow."

A desire for independence is emerging among the rebels in the Nicaraguan jungle. As happened with the Salvadoran right, the United States has sustained and molded an opposition strong enough to carry on the fight even if Congress never restores funds. They are not powerful enough to overthrow the Sandinista government, but they are, again like the Salvadoran right, strong enough to be an unpredictable force for destabilization. □

WHERE THE CARROUSEL STOPS

Memories of Circuses Past

EDWARD HOAGLAND

Having worked in the circus thirty-five years ago, I went to the splendiferous auction of circus memorabilia held at the Seventh Regiment Armory on Park Avenue in New York City in mid-February. There were exact replicas, in one-inch scale, of the cookhouse tents I used to eat in and the supply wagons I slept under. Also about ninety horses with snake-pit manes and flaring nostrils, gaping mouths and outkicked hooves, that had been cannibalized or left over from dismantled carrousels. The gorilla Gargantua II, whom I knew in his childhood, sold for $20,350, stuffed, with a fine true-to-life benign expression and his tremendous fingers brought up to drum on his gigantic chest.

Carved dioramas re-created circus history from Barnum's Jumbo in 1882, and from the day when Albert Ringling set off from Baraboo, Wisconsin, with his four brothers, two years later, balancing a plow on his chin to show the world what he could do. An honest-to-goodness mud scene of the 1930s depicted twenty horses trying to budge a pole wagon that had got mired to the axles, with an elephant dutifully shoving it from behind as well. And in a miniature menagerie yaks stood shouldering water buffaloes and musk oxen, from an era when Americans still lived close to and were intensely intrigued by animals.

A bunch of Felix Adler's clown costumes were auctioned off—dummy heads and bizarrely broad feet, wild zany wigs and rubber noses, pneumatic suits, dog masks and a Siamese-twin monkey outfit. Adler (1897–1960) was a "grotesque white-face," in circus parlance, which means he painted his features to exaggerate them. He called himself the King of the Clowns, sometimes sporting a gold crown, which irritated several colleagues. He stuck beach balls into the seat of his capacious pants to make his rear end swell, and on the bulb of his nose he wore a red light which occasionally shorted out when he went backstage between acts and put on his wire-rimmed reading spectacles. His trademark was the succession of little pigs that he trained to follow him around the hippodrome track (and fed a secret diet of baking soda to keep them small for as long as he could). But he had many other ringwise wiles, and carrying his six-inch umbrella on a five-foot handle, he performed at

Edward Hoagland has written many books. His first, Cat Man, *about the circus, was reissued last year by Arbor House.*

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the White House for Calvin Coolidge and Franklin Roosevelt. A part-Sioux from Clinton, Iowa, he had first appeared under a big top at the age of 10 with a dog and pony show, and claimed that he preferred pigs because, "like clowns, they have sad, suspicious eyes but always look as if they're smiling." He didn't marry until he was 50, meeting his wife, Amelia, in a department store in Richmond, Virginia, where he was performing during the off-season. His pig got loose and ran under her desk in the credit office. He died in New York City in the February of another off-season, while waiting for spring, and his obituaries ought to have mentioned that he was regarded as probably the most generous-spirited clown to have graced a circus tent in living memory.

At the Armory I noticed too, and was touched by, an old scalloped, medallion-shaped, yellow-and-beige sign that was being auctioned:

AGNES

ALTHOUGH NATIVE TO AFRICA, "AGNES," A RETICULATED GIRAFFE, WAS BORN EIGHT YEARS AGO ON A RINGLING BROS. AND BARNUM & BAILEY CIRCUS TRAIN PASSING THROUGH PITTSBURGH. SHE MEASURES 22 FEET TALL AND WEIGHS OVER 2,000 LBS. HER FAVORITE FOOD IS FRESH, ALFALFA HAY.

I might have liked it anyway for that last comma; but what reverberated for me was the memory of how Agnes used to bend her limber, stalklike neck deeply down on a hot afternoon to lick my sweaty cheeks, and how on cold or stormy nights I often took shelter in her wagon.

I made a bid for the sign, then dropped out when the price grew silly (two-foot model bandwagons were bringing as much as a new Ford costs), though I was sure it was an artifact from that marvelous year when I was 18 and traveled from Connecticut to Nebraska with Ringling Brothers for $14 a week plus board. The next morning, however, I woke up with the knowledge that the giraffe I had lived with (whose official keeper was named Ray, who spent *his* nights with the Fat Lady) was not Agnes at all but Edith, Agnes's mother. Agnes had been a young squirt of an adolescent when I had thrown half-bales of hay up into the racks of their cages and hung the water pails as high as I could lift them. "Edith!" I would call, and watch her bow her lofty neck way down and unsheathe her purple tongue and feel it tickle my whiskers while she licked my face for salt to help her (as I learned later in biology) with the important task of digesting all of that hay.

The stock market has been booming lately, and so among the folk-art collectors and antique dealers were numerous financially cheerful people looking for a merry-go-round horse for a picture window or a parade wagon for an end table. There were shopping-mall developers in search of a drawing card and investors after a tax shelter. Hustlers with a Ferris wheel to sell or an entire steeplechase of wooden horses circulated in the rich brew of that cavernous drill room, alongside present-day circus performers with exotic, dashing sorts of faces, who were on a busman's holiday, and one rueful gentleman, who mentioned having bought a fifty-two-horse carrousel for $4,100 in the late 1950s, which he had quite promptly resold. The horses might be worth

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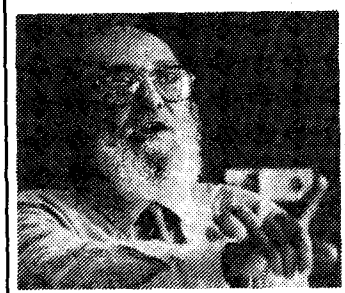

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$4,100 apiece nowadays, to judge from the prices that we were witnessing.

Mostly, women were buying the horses (or husbands in their 50s were buying for women in their 30s), and men were buying the circus relics—men whose still-boyish faces were concealed behind forbidding beards or business bifocals or the physiognomy of a poker player. I spoke to a few circus veterans who had given their lives to show business, not just a matter of months as I had, and we were philosophical about being no match for this company. We had our memories, and needed a scale model of the circus no more than carvings of the Main Street buildings of our hometowns. □

DUGWAY PROVING GROUND

Test Site for Germ Warfare?

CHARLES PILLER

Last October Democratic Senator Jim Sasser revealed that the U.S. Army plans to build a $1.4 million biological weapons test laboratory that will conduct secret research on "substantial volumes of toxic biological aerosol agents." The news sparked protest among scientists who fear the facility will violate the 1972 Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons. Harvard University microbiologist Richard Goldstein spoke for many of his colleagues when he told *Science*, "In my mind, the opening of this facility substantially escalates the biological arms race." The Defense Department explained that the purpose of the research will be defensive, which is permissible under the treaty, and that the tests will be carried out under conditions of utmost safety.

The project was temporarily stalled when a lawsuit brought by a Washington-based research group forced the department to assess the need for an environmental impact report before construction could begin. In early February the Army concluded that no such report was needed. In the next few weeks the U.S. District Court in Washington will hear the case.

The new laboratory is the centerpiece of a $250 million modernization and expansion program at Dugway Proving Ground, a chemical and biological weapons research complex located eighty-seven miles from Salt Lake City. Dugway's workload is expected to double by 1988, according to the Army, and 309 employees will be added to its payroll.

The proving ground's history gives little reason to trust in the Defense Department's characterization of the research to be conducted there. In the 1950s and 1960s, the University of Utah conducted secret experiments under contract with Dugway, involving large-scale field testing of some of the most infectious and toxic biological warfare (B.W.) agents, including tuleremia, Rocky Mountain spotted fever, plague and rickettsia ("Q-fever"). The tests are the only known outdoor dissemination of B.W. agents near populated areas. Because they were subject to Army censorship, it is unknown if full test results have ever been released.

The testing of chemical weapons at Dugway caused a furor when an accidental discharge of nerve gas killed thousands of livestock in 1968. Information about the field tests of B.W. agents came out in 1969, when William Lockhart, a professor of law at the University of Utah, obtained documents relating to them in the school's research office.

According to the documents, which included the research contracts, correspondence and memorandums, the tests were designed to track the spread of various disease-causing agents. The germs were transmitted by insects, and their course was charted by tabulating the location and number of wild animals infected. Animals were also infected in aerosol chambers. The Dugway experiments were intended to collect data on how B.W. agents behave outside the laboratory. The lack of such information had prevented their use on the battlefield.

The research contracts refer to "primary areas of biological agent release" and to animal testing "at appropriate distances downwind from such areas"—strongly suggesting open-air spraying. Lockhart says that the university probably became involved when Dugway requested its help to track the spread of disease-causing agents to areas outside the facility during earlier tests.

The Army was fully aware that the diseases might spread outside the test zones to populated areas. One contract states, "It will not be possible to prescribe safety parameters to preclude the spread of [diseases] to livestock or humans." Another calls for analysis of "morbidity surveillance data regarding . . . geographical spread beyond focal areas and/or the Dugway Proving Ground geographic limits." The data would be used to determine "the initiating . . . and spread of infection from wildlife to man or his domestic animals." The researchers concluded, "The best control procedure is the passive one of doing nothing, other than surveillance, and allowing the [disease] to come to its own natural termination."

Biophysicist Robert Sinsheimer, chancellor of the University of California, Santa Cruz, called the tests irresponsible. "I don't know of any other instance of this kind of experiment," he said.

At the University of Utah, however, researchers regarded the tests as proper, according to an internal memorandum, because the diseases studied were endemic to Utah or nearby states. But as Sinsheimer points out, "If [a disease] is endemic and a problem, you don't want to increase the problem."

When the biological weapons tests were discovered in 1969, there was so much criticism that by 1971 the university decided to greatly restrict its secret research for the Army. But unlike the Dugway nerve gas incident, the revelations of

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B.W. tests drew little attention beyond the university, and the controversy was forgotten after President Nixon signed the biological weapons convention. Last year, however, opponents of the new Dugway lab revived it.

Whether secret outdoor tests of B.W. agents took place in other parts of the country is unknown. However, reports surfaced in the 1970s that the Army conducted outdoor tests in several large cities with "simulants"—relatively innocuous organisms that mimic the behavior of B.W. agents—during the 1950s and 1960s [see Leonard A. Cole, "The Army's Secret Germ-War Testing," *The Nation*, October 23, 1982]. Simulant tests are believed to have caused several illnesses and at least one death. In view of those tests and the ones at Dugway, the Army's protestations that it is concerned about public safety and is testing only for defensive purposes must be regarded with considerable skepticism.

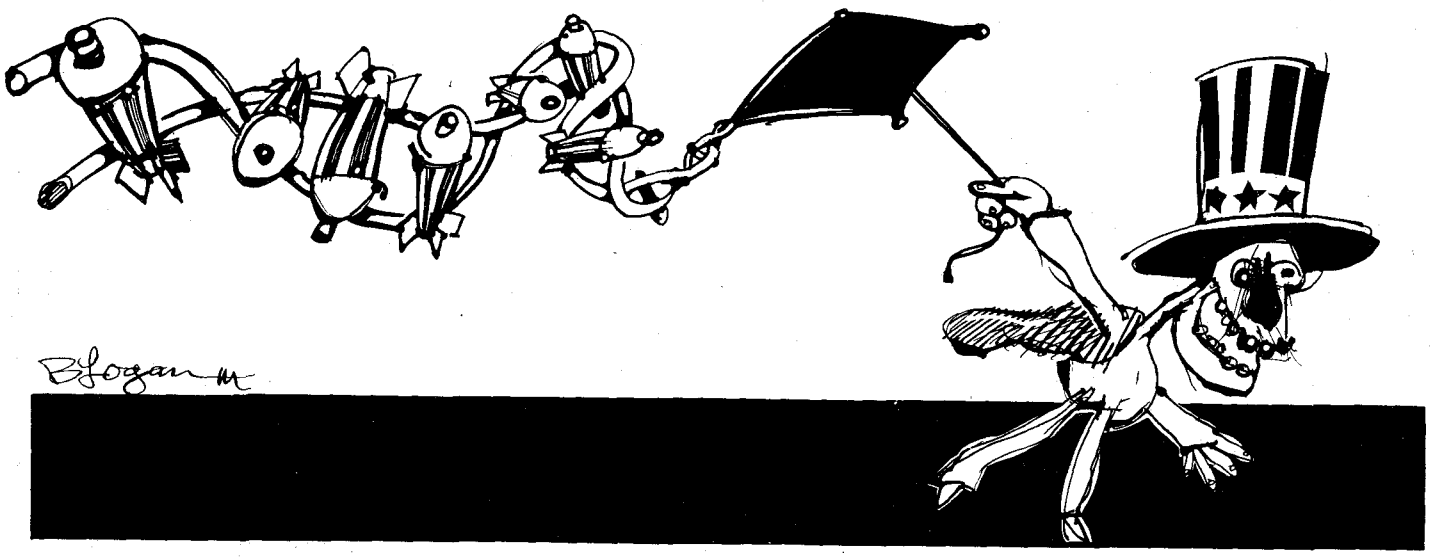
In its request to Congress for funding, the Army said the laboratory would be used "to evaluate biological defensive readiness and to test protective gear and detection/warning equipment by employing toxic microorganisms and biological toxins requiring a level of containment and safety not now available within the Department of Defense."

But those claims have never been subjected to public scrutiny. Although appropriations for such a facility are normally debated by Congress, the Defense Department sidestepped that by burying the funding request in a routine application to transfer unspent funds from other Army projects. Such requests are typically rubber-stamped by the ranking Republican and Democrat on the House and the Senate Appropriations Committees' Subcommittees on Military Construction. Senator Sasser had done so but then took the extraordinary step of withdrawing his assent. In a letter to subcommittee chair Mack Mattingly, Sasser complained that there was no statutory authority for the project and that it raised "important questions with regard to the potential capabilities for testing and production of offensive lethal biological and toxin weapons." He concluded that the Army sought "to avoid the regular authorization and appropriation process of the Congress."

At Mattingly's urging, the subcommittee members voted to override Sasser's objection. In a letter to Sasser, Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger said that the lab would not be used to develop offensive biological weapons and that the Defense Department did not intend to violate the 1972 B.W. convention. But even the military acknowledges that the difference between offensive and defensive B.W. research is a tenuous one. Many leading scientists question the need to test such agents for purely defensive purposes. Harvard University biochemist Matthew Meselson, one of the country's foremost experts on chemical and biological warfare, says that simulants could provide more useful information than actual agents, without the risk.

Many scientists contend that truly defensive work can and should be done openly. They believe that the Defense Department's acknowledgment that the lab will be used for secret work suggests that the department intends to develop offensive weapons. A further concern is the possible use of the lab to conduct experiments in recombinant DNA (gene-splicing), which molecular biologist and Nobel laureate David Baltimore says should be completely ruled out for the most toxic organisms. Gene-splicing could be used to refine existing biological agents to create, for example, greater potency or resistance to antibiotics [see Piller, "DNA—Key to Biological Warfare?" *The Nation*, December 10, 1983]. Although the Army says no gene-splicing research is projected at this time, neither has it been ruled out. Weinberger has defended the lab as essential to counter a perceived Soviet advantage in genetic engineering. In addition, the use of aerosol sprays in DNA experiments is opposed by most scientists. "Aerosols are the most dangerous vehicle for dissemination," according to David Novick, a molecular biologist and former member of the Federal committee that oversees recombinant DNA work. He said that Federal guidelines on such research call for the absolute avoidance of aerosols because of the greater likelihood that some organisms would escape.

The Army claims that testing will be carried out under complete physical containment, but Novick says that



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is "a theoretical as well as practical impossibility." Biological containment—genetic crippling of potentially dangerous organisms to make out-of-lab survival impossible—is required under gene-splicing guidelines, but it would be antithetical to the testing of biological warfare agents.

After the subcommittee approved funding for the lab, the Foundation on Economic Trends, headed by Jeremy Rifkin, an author and critic of genetic engineering, and Gene La Rocque, a retired Navy admiral and director of the Center for Defense Information, filed suit to bar construction. They charged that the Defense Department had violated the National Environmental Policy Act by failing to prepare an environmental impact report.

Rifkin points out that besides being so near a major metropolitan area, Dugway is the site of a conventional-weapons testing range. That raises the additional concern that dangerous microorganisms could be released should a projectile accidentally hit the lab. Rifkin believes his organization's suit will force the Army to give up the idea of testing B.W. agents because the environmental safeguards required by law cannot be implemented.

But even if the suit is successful, research in biological and chemical agents is likely to continue, following a familiar pattern established by the Reagan Administration in other military areas. To a relentless drumbeat, Soviet strength is exaggerated while equivalent U.S. capabilities are minimized. Using that method, the Administration has in each of the past three years nearly succeeded in getting Congress to renew the manufacture of nerve gas, which was halted by President Nixon in 1969.

Now the military's sights are set on biological warfare. As "yellow rain," the toxic substance allegedly used by the Russians or their allies in Indochina and Afghanistan, receded from the headlines, the Administration found a new enemy: Soviet genetic engineering. On at least a dozen separate occasions last year, during which funding for U.S. military biotechnology research mushroomed, the Defense Department and the Central Intelligence Agency accused the Russians of using gene-splicing to create new biological weapons. In his letter to Senator Sasser, Weinberger wrote, "We continue to obtain new evidence that the Soviet Union has maintained its offensive biological warfare program and that it is exploring genetic engineering to expand their program's scope."

Representatives for the Defense Department admit the evidence falls far short of proof, but most information is classified. When I made a request under the Freedom of Information Act for material to verify the Administration's claim about Soviet genetic engineering experiments, I received hundreds of pages from the Defense Intelligence Agency and the C.I.A. Nearly every reference to Soviet military work in genetic engineering had been censored.

Not that those agencies are opposed to selective leaks. Last year, syndicated columnist Jack Anderson and *Wall Street Journal* editorial writer William Kucewicz published stories based on classified information "proving" that the Russians were using genetic engineering for military pur-

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poses. Although considered unsubstantiated and one-sided by knowledgeable scientists, the articles gave the military's scare campaign a major publicity boost.

More important than the verity of those articles is their relationship to repeated allegations—in support of the new lab and in connection with many previous projects—of violations of the B.W. convention by the Soviet Union. The Administration's charges were publicly disputed by Paul Warnke, Gerard Smith and Herbert Scoville Jr., former arms control advisers to four Presidents. Even if true, they argued, the allegations should first be made to the Russians privately. The Administration's talk of treaty violations without demonstrable proof arouses suspicion that its real motive is to frighten Congress into approving money for new weapons.

Speaking about yellow rain on public television's *Nova*, Harvard biochemist Meselson said U.S. accusations could make verifiable agreements impossible, either because the negotiating atmosphere will be poisoned or because enough U.S. senators will be persuaded to scuttle ratification. "Treaties should be based . . . on verifiable provisions," he said, "but these allegations have muddied the waters and hang as a miasma over the negotiation process."

Given its unsavory history, the same miasma hangs over Dugway Proving Ground. □

Star Wars

(*Continued From Front Cover*)

blocking of each side's missiles—that could be achieved tomorrow, at no cost at all, by a rational agreement by both parties to disarm. His proposal belongs to the psychopathology of ideology and not to rational strategy at all. Before we come to that, let us inspect its purported rationality.

The view of independent scientists—those who are not in Pentagon-related employment and who do not stand to gain from the research bonanza—is that the Star Wars project cannot work. In a letter to *The Wall Street Journal* on January 2, Hans Bethe and five other eminent American scientists summed up their major objections, which fall under several headings:

Underflying. It would be possible to get under the shield using cruise missiles, low-altitude warplanes or suitcase bombs.

Overwhelming. It would be possible to saturate a defense system with multiple attacks, insuring that a proportion of the missiles would get through. (Even 5 percent of 10,000 missiles would be enough to devastate either superpower.)

Outfoxing. While one side was building a Star Wars system the other side would have ample time to devise countermeasures of decoys and penetration aids.

Cost. Up to $1 trillion for implementing only the first major phase.

Soviet pre-emption. The Soviet military (or whoever has been nominated as the enemy in 2009) would perceive such a shield as giving the United States immunity, enabling it to launch a first strike, and would be tempted to "retaliate first."

Those objections are made on the assumption that Star Wars would be technologically feasible. As far as I can understand (Prof. John Charles Polanyi gives a clear beginner's guide to the subject in *The Nuclear Crisis Reader*, edited by Gwyn Prins), antisatellite weapons are certainly feasible, and until recently the Soviet Union may have led in this field; weapons orbiting in space are a gruesome possibility; and at great cost, defenses against ballistic missiles might also prove feasible—with, of course, the aforementioned underflying, overwhelming and outfoxing gaps.

But long before the hypothetical, semi-impermeable shield was in place, the project would go through intermediate stages. As Under Secretary of Defense for Policy Fred Iklé remarked at a secret session of the Senate Armed Services Committee last year, "As you move toward deployment of the full system, there are some intermediate steps which have intermediate utility. . . . Components of a multi-tiered defense could become deployed earlier than a complete system."

Those components relate to what is known as point defense: a collaboration of highly developed radar, infrared sensors, interceptor missiles and so on, which would protect specific targets against incoming intercontinental ballistic missiles. A Defense Department pamphlet published last April predicted that point defenses might be available between 1990 and 2000. That is a great relief. We are all in favor of defense. But what is the point of point defense? Which points would it defend? Well, really sensitive targets, of course: the missile silos at Grand Forks, North Dakota, and the arcana of national security and command, control, communications and intelligence facilities. Cities? People? You're joking! Point defense could cover select areas up to a radius of thirty miles. Thus, for some years the good folk of Middle America would undergo a period of "intermediate utility" in which their missiles were protected but they were not.

Never mind. As *The New York Times* remarked at the end of a tortuous February 7 editorial, "Even a partial defense must be better than no defense." Amen, says common sense. What then of one of the superpowers' rare negotiating successes, the ABM Treaty of 1972, which very severely limited any such defenses to two systems on each side? Perhaps it was because such defenses were impracticable at the time. But the official reason given for this upside-down logic (defenses are threatening but missiles give security) was that ABM systems are destabilizing. They strike at the very heart of deterrence theory: the assurance of mutual threat.

A great many NATO warriors and media wizards have been assuring us for years that deterrence theory has biblical

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E.P. Thompson is a vice president of the Committee for Nuclear Disarmament. A collection of his essays and creative writing, The Heavy Dancers, *and also a reply to critics of the peace movement,* Double Exposure, *will be published next month by Merlin Press.*

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authority. Britain's Secretary of State for Defense Michael Heseltine has told us that it is the only thing that, for the past thirty years, has held up the sky. Whatever else Star Wars explodes, it has exploded deterrence theory. Several distinguished professors are having to rewrite their undergraduate class lectures, which is an insufferable indignity.

The Times assures us, in the same editorial, that the "campaign" against the Strategic Defense Initiative is "Soviet inspired." That is a strange claim, since the first sign of that campaign—when Reagan unveiled Star Wars—was hilarity in the American scientific community. That could not have been orchestrated by the K.G.B. because the K.G.B. has never been known to laugh. The Russians, however, have reason not to find Star Wars funny. They have been pushing ahead with their own space experiments, but a massive arms race in space is something their stretched economy does not need.

More than that, the intermediate utility of point defense would put the Russians at a disadvantage. Soviet land-based ICBMs would take thirty minutes to reach the United States. That gives time for satellite and radar identification and for X-ray lasers and interceptors to go to work. But U.S. forward-based missiles in Europe, such as the Pershing 2s, need travel only a few minutes to their destinations. Thus, point defense would be simpler for the United States than for the Soviet Union.

The reaction of the members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization to Star Wars fell short of gratitude. At first sight, and at second sight, it seemed a bum deal. They suspected a retreat to Fortress America. If America alone had a shield, they reasoned, then the Soviet Union, since it could not retaliate against the United States, would take it out on the allies. If both sides had shields, Europe would be a no man's land, with laser-zapped nukes falling on their heads.

Moreover, as the London *Guardian* has asked, if both superpowers are protected by domes, "What thereafter becomes of the British and French nuclear deterrents?" The answer, which the *Guardian* unaccountably overlooked, is that those two countries could point them across the Channel and use them to deter each other. But all those lovely nukes, including Hades and Trident, would cease overnight to be deterrents to the Soviet Union and would become mere irritants. That irritated Prime Minister Thatcher so much that with uncustomary temerity, she allowed herself, in the course of her recent meeting in Moscow with Mikhail Gorbachev, to express her concern about an arms race in space.

I am now at liberty to reveal the sequel to this petty treason. The Prime Minister flew on to Beijing and thence took off for a lunch date with President Reagan on December 22. While she was over the Western Pacific, Reagan, who had been informed of her impertinence, cabled the plane: either Thatcher must eat her words or she must take her lunch at McDonald's. Thatcher ate her words, first on the plane and then with the President, who had them served up to her like sausages on a waffle with maple syrup.

In return for her renewed fealty, Reagan issued all his European allies a very large public waffle, to the effect that the impermeable shield or dome or umbrella would be extended over them too. That nonsensical promise was not worth the spit that issued with it, but the loyal governments and their servile media are now swimming around happily in the spittoon.

Reagan will exact a small political price for his waffle. As an article in the July/August issue of *Arms Control Today* pointed out, while interceptor systems against intermediate-range missiles (such as SS-20s) might be feasible in Europe, the interceptors "would have as little as three to ten minutes to detect, identify, track, target and attack incoming warheads." Such a quick reaction would require "an automated and automatic US ABM response," such as a launch-on-warning system. "There will be no time to work through NATO's established consultative channels. European political authorities thus will be effectively removed from any active role in decisions concerning nuclear war on their own soil." The dome turns out to be an automated system for the extinction of European autonomy.

Thus far, I have been speaking not about the impermeable shield, which is impossible, but about intermediate utilities: the bits of space and interceptor technology that are feasible and that we may well get. Obviously, they would create fearsome new dangers, instabilities and tensions. The fact that the Soviet military is already tensing up against Star Wars is not, as *The Times* supposes, an argument in its favor. It enhances the dangers. But as I said earlier, Reagan's policy belongs not to rational strategy but to the psychopathology of ideology. How is that?

Nations do not normally lay heavy burdens on their taxpayers and inflate the national debt just to humor the fantasies of a leader. There must be either some hidden agenda or some ideological delirium here. I detect both. The hidden agenda is in two forms. First, the proposal has been pushed

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by those whom Lord Zuckerman has called "the alchemists of the laboratories" and the very powerful arms lobby whose lips are drooling with the prospects of fat order books for the next twenty to thirty years. Such a project will acquire "institutional momentum," as Hans Bethe and his fellow scientists point out in their letter to *The Wall Street Journal*. "When a trillion dollars is waved at the US aerospace industry, the project will rapidly acquire a life of its own—independent of the validity of its public justifications." It has already spawned a major interest group. It is a juggernaut which will roll on.

But even that powerful lobby, which is not yet a majority shareholder in the U.S. economy, could not sell the Pentagon a package of rubbish whose costs competed with the more credible demands of the armed services. The components of Star Wars that the Pentagon really wants are the intermediate utilities, such as point defense for their silos and MX missile bases, and stations and weapons in space that might give the United States clear superiority. The talk of an impenetrable shield is strictly cosmetic—a P.R. operation.

Yet the project also has life within American ideology. *The Times*, in its tormented editorial, acclaims President Reagan as a profound strategist, more farsighted than his chiefs of staff, wiser than the "East Coast establishment" with its "fashionable dissent," more informed than his own scientific community. That is codswallop. The President is no strategist; he cannot tell an ICBM from an ABM. He is a superbly successful populist politician who can tune a policy like a guided missile and home it in on the prejudices of Middle America.

Ideologically, Star Wars represents the ultimate breakdown of deterrence theory, an attempt by the U.S. nuclear establishment to return to the womb of Hiroshima. Ever since the Soviet Union achieved nuclear parity, the members of that establishment have become increasingly fretful. They possessed this huge bludgeoning and blackmailing power—which, however, they could never use—and the world was beginning to tumble to the fact. For a decade they have been trying this and that trick to regain nuclear "superiority," but each of those has been implausible.

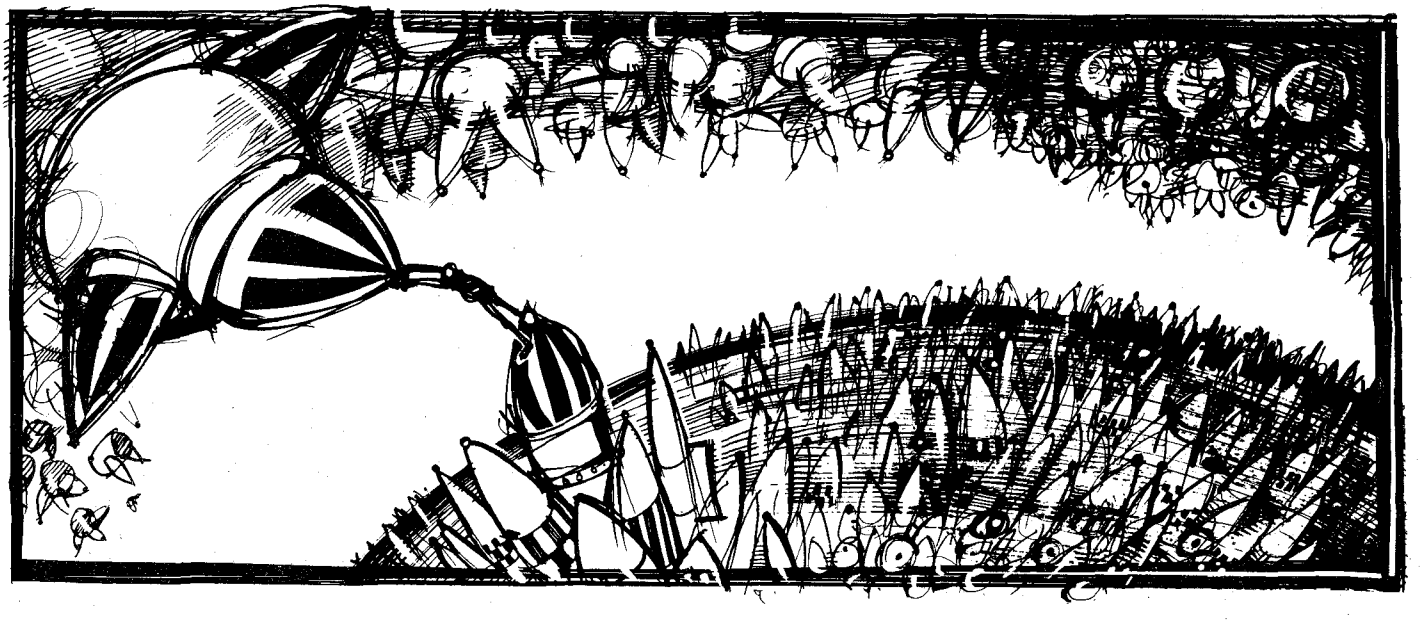
Delving into their memories, President Reagan and his friends recalled those blissful years from 1945 through 1950, when the United States had the bomb and the Other did not. It is out of their frustration with the present and their memories of that golden sanctuary of the past that the ideological and political drive of Star Wars has come. Let us abolish the Other's bomb! Let us secure the moral ends of America with an impermeable shield! Let us once again be able to threaten a world that cannot retaliate! Once the solution has been found, then money and know-how must be able to bring it about.

The Star Wars ideological delirium is attuned to all the worst traditions of American right-wing populism. With astonishing simplicity it combines isolationism ("They can't get us") with external menace. It combines the citizen's faith that whatever America does must be moral, and that the bomb is God's gift to protect the Free World, with the old American preference for fixing things by technological means rather than by political resolution. It massages the American ego by intoning homilies about saving humanity and saving millions of lives, while drawing humanity into a new dimension of danger.

We should not dismiss this as mere politicians' talk, as cynical rhetoric to cover more limited objectives. Star Wars, with its high-tech sheen, encodes ideological forces that act on their own. The President himself may be a true believer.

When the most powerful nation on earth crawls back into an ideological womb it means that an epoch is coming to an end. It is a terrifying signal of our human predicament. This combination of material avarice (the arms lobby) and ideological self-delusion may prove to be the terminal dementia of the nuclear age.

There will never be an impermeable shield against nuclear evil. There is—and there has been for forty years—only one shield against chaos: that pitifully weak and yet somehow indestructible shield of the human conscience. It is as full of holes as a sieve, but it has held off chaos for forty years. It is time to put it in repair. □



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BOOKS & THE ARTS.

A World Elsewhere

JACKSON LEARS

THE SIMPLE LIFE: Plain Living and High Thinking in American Culture. *By David E. Shi. Oxford University Press. 332 pp. $19.95.*

Not long ago, as I drove across the cold prairie and flipped the radio dial, I heard a resentful male voice singing that "a country boy can survive." The voice told about a friend who'd gone to the city and prospered for a while before being laid off, mugged and killed when he took to packing a gun to defend himself. The song went on to say that a country boy didn't need that kind of trouble: he could bring down a buck at fifty yards, set a trout line—hell, he could even make his own wine. Country folk could *survive*. The ideal of the self-sufficient simple life was reduced to the stuff of survivalist fantasy.

There was a time when the simple life kept more polite company. In the late 1970s, L.L. Bean was, temporarily at least, the clothier of choice among Washington's upwardly mobile; in the mid-1980s there are no doubt many unworn pairs of work boots moldering in the closets of refurbished town houses behind Capitol Hill. The change of fashion embodies a change of mind. Simplicity chic, for all its silliness, occasionally reflected an awareness that the pursuit of wealth required some constraints, if only to minimize environmental health hazards. That awareness has dissipated as the era of limits has yielded to the decade of the entrepreneur. The will to growth is legitimized by intellectuals such as anthropologist Mary Douglas, who belittles campaigns against pollution by comparing them to primitive purity rites.

David Shi's fine book makes clear that the ideal of the simple life so popular in the 1960s and 1970s involved more than a passing yen for trail mix and alfalfa sprouts. It was in fact only the most recent expression of a complex intellectual tradition which has shaped American culture for centuries. As Shi acknowledges, the simple life has often been less a life of rural simplicity than of "stylish rusticity," but it has also occasionally led to a serious critique of private gain at the public expense. If many of Shi's sources for this tradition are familiar, he does a masterful job of bringing them together in a balanced, sensitive and comprehensive account of a major theme in American cultural history.

Shi begins at Plymouth Rock, steering clear of the unregenerate colonists at Jamestown. The Puritan ministry fretted continually about their communities' "declension" from high standards of frugality. Even the most pious Puritan's dedication to simplicity was sorely tried by the results of his work ethic; diligence brought luxury and the temptations to indolence. (The Quakers encountered the same fatal dialectic.) The growth of glittering fortunes provoked increasing shrillness in the Puritans' characteristic rhetorical form, the jeremiad. During the Revolutionary era, the jeremiad became politicized: in the colonists' imagination, luxury was a peculiarly British disease, and colonial leaders defined an emerging sense of nationhood by their own Spartan simplicity. As the infant republic required its citizens to elevate "public virtue" over private gain, a scorn for display became evidence of patriotism.

But in the early nineteenth century, the preoccupation with frugal living gave way to material success as the measure of public virtue. A superabundance of natural resources and entrepreneurial opportunities promoted the steady privatization of the protestant/republican ethic. By midcentury, the ideal of republican simplicity was confined to the domestic novels of Sarah Josepha Hale and the esthetic pronouncements of Andrew Jackson Downing, who urged "sincerity" in residential design.

Yet at about the same time a more romantic version of simplicity surfaced in the writings of Henry David Thoreau and the Concord transcendentalists. The wilderness that had nurtured entrepreneurship also bred the idea that this was "nature's nation," where one could establish Emerson's "original relation with the universe." A longing for what the essayist John Burroughs called "direct and immediate contact with things, life with the false trappings torn away," intensified during the second half of the nineteenth century. A craving for immediate experience led William James into the Adirondacks and Theodore Roosevelt up San Juan Hill; by 1910 it had energized numerous back-to-the-land movements and handicraft revivals. Some simple-lifers dug turnips, split wood and sat by the fire reading Burroughs's latest piece in *Century*. A few heard the call of the wild and followed John Muir into Yosemite. Most merely sent their sons to the nearest dude ranch to toughen up.

In both its serious and superficial guises the simple life remains an organizing principle for agrarian communards, an impetus for the decentralist critiques of Paul Goodman, Lewis Mumford and E.F. Schumacher and a cultural resource for conservationists and ecologists. Ancient and international in its origins, the gospel of simplicity has resonated with particular force in nature's nation. Yet Shi's story is, all told, a sad one of failed utopias and frustrated hopes. Often beneficiaries of industrial capitalism, the devotees of simplicity were doomed to be its countercultural conscience, heeded (if at all) only during periods of "economic decline, political crisis, or moral excitement."

Shi can hardly be blamed for not separating all the strands in this richly textured tradition. He might have explored more carefully the split between solitude and community that runs from Puritanism to the present. He might also have devoted more attention to the shift in the meaning of simplicity that occurred around the mid-nineteenth century, when romantic spontaneity appeared alongside Calvinist discipline and mass production began to create the clutter that made simplicity seem all the more desirable.

Shi is right, though, to stress a certain continuity. Secularized Calvinism persisted in a variety of forms, notably in the functionalist ethics and esthetics congenial to many educated professionals in the twentieth century. Combining distaste for ornament with devotion to systematic achievement, this functionalism found its characteristic embodi-

Jackson Lears is the author of No Place of Grace: Antimodernism and the Transformation of American Culture, 1880–1920 *(Pantheon).*

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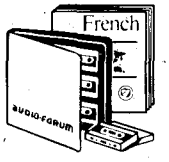

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ment in the academics' apartment, done in "institutional brown and library gray," which Norman Mailer satirized in *Armies of the Night.* Functionalism lay behind Thorstein Veblen's critique of "conspicuous consumption" and accounts for Veblen's (otherwise inexplicable) popularity among liberals and radicals for the last several decades. The legitimate heirs of this utilitarian brand of simplicity have been some of the purist leaders of the consumer movement in their less attractive moments—during the 1930s, for example, when many consumer activists seemed more concerned with eliminating waste than with ending injustice.

In consumer movements and elsewhere, the elite social background of the simple-lifers has been evident. As Shi observes, from William Penn to *The Nation*'s own E.L. Godkin, the ideologues of simplicity sometimes prescribed constraints for the lower orders that they were unwilling to accept for themselves. But the difficulty ran deeper: by presenting social problems as individual moral failings, the jeremiad implicitly reaffirmed the structural status quo. The most recent example was Jimmy Carter's "crisis of confidence" speech of July 1979, in which (as Shi notes) he attacked self-seeking hedonism without even a nod toward the corporate institutions that promote it. But at that moment, the idiom of "declension" was exhausted. Carter's plea for public virtue evoked universal derision as a dour evangelical's attempt to turn a people of plenty into "a nation of monks." Reagan effectively used the optimistic side of the jeremiad, reaffirming America's sacred purpose in terms of private abundance and military might. Carter became the skeleton at the feast set by a resurgent monied class.

Filled with apocalyptic claims and counterclaims, the debate over the simple life has touched some of the most sensitive nerves in the American polity. In our public discourse, at least, we are still a Protestant nation, sometimes fretfully examining ourselves for evidence of moral decline, sometimes claiming absolute assurance of salvation and damning all doubters. The ideal of simplicity has attracted the doubters—not only moralists like Carter but skeptics who question whether our enthusiasts of abundance have provided the pleasure and freedom they promise. Talk of serenity through simplicity has often concealed a vein of anxious long-

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ing for a world elsewhere. Often the anxiety has been peculiarly male. (In republican ideology, effeminacy was handmaiden to luxury and as great a threat to public virtue.) In the mid-nineteenth century, manly commitments to civic duty made room for dreams of eternal boyishness; countless novelists climbed aboard Huck Finn's raft and fled domestic entrapment. But behind male fantasies of escape, the simple life has contained a more inclusive hope as well. Edward Bok, editor of *Ladies' Home Journal*, articulated it in 1901 when he claimed that America might become a nation of "real people, where each man and woman is measured by his or her own true worth . . . where lives are happiest because they are lived simplest: where the air is clear and where people look you in the eye, and where the clothes you wear do not signify."

The horror of sham, the reverence for the "real," the dream of transparent sincerity in social relations—these emotions have animated much of the modern passion for the simple life. Their most recent incarnation is in the criticism of consumer culture voiced by Herbert Marcuse and Ivan Illich (among others), particularly in the notion that mass marketing strategies create "false needs" for commodities undreamt of in simpler societies. A number of criticisms could be brought against this view, but the most serious problem is that there is no substratum of "true need" we can use as a bench mark; all human needs are mediated by cultural and social circumstance. There is a certain pathos in Bok's dream of a world where "the clothes you wear do not signify." In any organized society, clothes convey meaning; it is a commonplace of semiotics that clothing constitutes a kind of language. The irony is that even as Bok preached simplicity, the magazine he edited became a major vehicle for national advertisements that encrusted clothes and other commodities with new layers of social significance.

Still, the ideal of the simple life has scientific, political and philosophical dimensions worth pondering. About the science I am ill qualified to write, but many such as Rachel Carson and Michael Brown have made the case plainly and are not to be lightly dismissed by the fanciful analogies of Mary Douglas. Politically, the simple life has democratic implications: it encourages basic competence and discourages dependence on technical elites. To know how to house and warm yourself, "to be in direct and personal contact with the sources of your material life" (as Burroughs said) is not necessarily to succumb to survivalism. The decision to "do it yourself" can imply a refusal to slip into rapt contemplation of technological miracles peddled by experts, a reassertion of the value of ordinary intelligence and judgment.

This does not require a resurrection of obsessive Victorian work habits. On the contrary: since the mid-nineteenth century, devotees of simplicity have often sought not to reject pleasure but to enhance it. They have fled a driven bourgeois society where people labor as anxiously at leisure as they do on the job. One of the great contributions of Marcuse and the Frankfurt school was to suggest the ways that leisure could become mechanized and performance-oriented under advanced capitalism; Thoreau had sensed the beginnings of the problem a century earlier. The most thoughtful advocates of the simple life have never merely preached asceticism. They have realized that the standard of living is a subjective value, and that affluence comes in many guises. One way to attain it is by reducing wants and working less, seeking to lengthen that "Sabbath of the affections and the soul" envisioned by Thoreau.

The ultimate significance of this tradition is that it encourages a prolonged encounter with the nonhuman world. We have heard so much about the "sentimentality" of "environmental extremists" we forget that it is at least as easy to sentimentalize human accomplishments by placing them at the center of the universe. In everyday life, it is easy to forget the cosmic indifference of the natural world. But one can still find it, and there are few stronger antidotes to human self-importance. The startled stare of a wild animal can still bring the realization: I have come to this place, and here is this Other—this silent passion, this strange fragility, this fate outside our fate and yet bound to it. □

Between Muste and Mao

MAURICE ISSERMAN

WHO SPOKE UP?: American Protest Against the War in Vietnam 1963–1975. *By Nancy Zaroulis and Gerald Sullivan. Doubleday. 460 pp. $18.95.*

Every couple of months one or another textbook publisher sends me its latest offering. That's one of the perquisites of being in the teaching profession. As perks go, it's not much, but I like it. It gives me the feeling of having my finger on the pulse of the American myth. In two recently published U.S. history texts, I found the following illustrations accompanying the section of the text devoted to the antiwar movement in the 1960s. In the first example, a photograph of striking students at Columbia in May 1968 is followed by a photograph of one of the slain students at Kent State in May 1970. There are also before-and-after photographs of Jerry Rubin in the late 1960s and the late 1970s, which frame an excerpt from *Growing (Up) at 37.* In the second example, a photograph of admiring students crowding around Eugene McCarthy is followed by one in which police are beating up students at the Chicago Democratic convention. The last illustration in this section is a photograph of an unidentified demonstration in November 1968 where a student holds up a sign declaring, "The Elections Don't Mean Shit." Textbooks both shape and reflect national myths: the prevailing myth about the 1960s is evidently that it was a time when "the young" did battle with "the establishment."

Perhaps the main virtue of Nancy Zaroulis and Gerald Sullivan's new book is that it rescues the "adult" or nonstudent half of the antiwar movement from obscurity without neglecting the better-known history of campus protest. The "war at home" in the 1960s has too often been trivialized by accounts which focus solely on issues and images of generational conflict. The antiwar movement enlisted the support of young and old, and as far as Zaroulis and Sullivan are concerned, it

Maurice Isserman is the author of Which Side Were You On? The American Communist Party During the Second World War *(Wesleyan University Press). He is writing a book about the American left in the 1950s.*

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was the older protesters who were finally more effective. Students for a Democratic Society staged the first important antiwar rally in Washington in 1965, but it soon abandoned the issue of the war for other concerns; coalitions such as the National Mobilization Committee to End the War in Vietnam picked up where S.D.S. left off and built a nationally organized antiwar movement. The "Mobe" and its successor organizations drew upon, but were not restricted to, a campus constituency. They were led by a diverse group of pacifists who had had their formative political experience in the 1940s and 1950s. Jerry Rubin and Mark Rudd make only brief appearances in *Who Spoke Up?*; the main protagonists and the real heroes are people such as Sidney Peck of the Cleveland Area Peace Action Council, Norma Becker of the Fifth Avenue Peace Parade Committee, Stewart Meacham of the American Friends Service Committee, Dave Dellinger of the Mobe and the Rev. A.J. Muste, who was at the center of the antiwar movement until his death at the age of 82 in 1967. Zaroulis and Sullivan admire people who combine organizational skills with sheer endurance. As they write of Muste:

> In his own person Muste represented what the movement most needed and the quality on which a tenuous unity depended: leadership. . . . Patience, persistence, unflagging zeal, a decent constraint were all embodied in the patriarchal figure of Muste. . . . He was a respecter of person, and all in turn respected him. . . . Muste brought something beyond his experience and consummate political skills to the often rancorous gatherings of the Left. He brought an integrity and an openness (not to be mistaken for naiveté) that either disarmed or ambushed the mean in spirit.

Some of Muste's associates remember him as a little less of a plaster saint and with a few more human flaws than this account suggests. But there was plenty of mean-spiritedness for Muste to disarm. *Who Spoke Up?* is, in part, a cautionary tale of the sectarian squabbling, posturing and political ineptitude that did so much to limit the appeal of the antiwar movement and left so many of its adherents burnt out in the 1970s. At the same time, Zaroulis and Sullivan show how the antiwar movement overcame both internal weaknesses and external hostility and eventually persuaded a majority of Americans of the folly of continuing the war in Vietnam.

Zaroulis and Sullivan begin their account on Hiroshima Day in 1963, when a small group of protesters from the Student Peace Union picketed the Federal Building in Philadelphia to protest American policies in Vietnam. Later that year S.D.S. and other groups heckled Madame Nhu, sister-in-law of South Vietnam's Ngo Dinh Diem, as she toured American campuses. The protests were small, and went almost unnoticed. The civil rights movement was absorbing the energy of most politically active students, while the pacifist movement was absorbed by the issue of the nuclear arms race. Early in 1965 the war in Vietnam began to dominate the headlines and attracted the attention of both S.D.S. and the pacifists, but no one had any organizational blueprints for creating a movement to oppose the war. Most of the early protests were ad hoc. No one realized that the United States was embarking on an imperial adventure that would take ten years to run its course.

The antiwar movement as we know it represented years of experimentation. In many ways it was a school in which the organizers learned what it was they were supposed to be organizing as they attempted to educate the American public about the war. There were brilliant breakthroughs, such as the teach-ins in the spring of 1965 and the March Against Death in Washington in November 1969, which dramatized the enormous number of American lives that had been squandered in the war. There were also a lot of bad ideas, as well as some good ones that were prematurely abandoned. Zaroulis and Sullivan admire the technical proficiency of the young organizers of the 1969 Vietnam Moratorium but are critical of their decision in the spring of 1970 to close up shop: "Unable to surpass their own bench mark of October 15 [1969], they lacked the endurance of their relatively elderly counterparts in the Mobilization."

The antiwar movement was led by radicals, but the quality of their radicalism varied. The most effective leaders were those who accepted the fact that they operated in an imperfect world where compromise was essential and no final and glorious victories were likely. Commenting on the cult that followed Che Guevara's death in Bolivia in 1967, Zaroulis and Sullivan write:

> Che appealed to the young who lusted after Third World revolution in the streets of America; Muste, a lifelong pacifist, was loved by a very different group, people in for the long haul rather than a quick fix of violence. Together, they embodied the two extremes of the still nascent antiwar movement.

Here I think *Who Spoke Up?* goes astray. Zaroulis and Sullivan's feel for the politics of the Mobe is much surer than their feel for what was going on within S.D.S. I remember being an admirer of both Muste and Guevara in 1967 and managed to overlook the contradictions between their positions. That may have been a measure of my own political naïveté, but it also suggests that political choices rarely present themselves with stark clarity, except in hindsight. Weatherman's "Days of Rage" in Chicago in October 1969 owed as much to Muste as they did to Mao, though neither man would have recognized them as legitimate offspring.

In the foreword to *Who Spoke Up?* the authors defend the antiwar movement against charges of "anti-Americanism." Actually, the problem with the younger half of the movement was that it was probably *too* American. In their moral perfectionism, radical individualism and rhetorical extravagance, young New Leftists were soul mates of William Lloyd Garrison, Albert Parsons and Woodrow Wilson. Older leaders in the movement were "un-American" in their willingness to cooperate, year after year, with imperfect human beings in the pursuit of limited goals. □

FILMS.

ANDREW KOPKIND

The Falcon and the Snowman

Born in the U.S.A., Christopher Boyce and Daulton Lee did what any red-blooded American lad in the 1970s would do if given half a chance: drop out of community college, deal drugs, romp with wildlife and sell state secrets to the Russians. Nothing surprising there, and it was the very banality of their lives and times that Robert Lindsey captured in his extraordinary account of their exploits, *The Falcon and the Snowman*. It was probably the best book of reportage about post-Vietnam,

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post-Watergate, postradical America, an elusive era of transition from idealism to cynicism, collective endeavor to private ambition, raised consciousness to lowered expectations. Boyce and Lee were caught in a highly specific yet broadly metaphoric frame on that swift trajectory: the almost-paradise of an oceanfront Los Angeles suburb, wedged between the data and defense towns, the Mexican Third World and the empty, beckoning desert. It was all there—whatever it was—and Lindsey was able to give it form and meaning by a meticulous attention to description, detail and story.

Director John Schlesinger and screenwriter Steven Zaillian appropriated the mass of material about Boyce and Lee, their history and surroundings, their fancies and delights. But where the book makes sense, the movie makes mishmash. This is not, after all, a simple tale of espionage, adolescent delinquency or flight and capture. It is an anti-epic of America set in a small community during a brief moment in the lives of a few people, but it needs time and space to make its complex and subtle points. The movie develops a plot but does not adequately create a mood, a morality or a motivation. It's all there, but the form and meaning are missing.

Boyce (Timothy Hutton), the brooding, hypersensitive underachiever, lived on the lower limits of the upper-middle-class Palos Verdes suburban tract. His father (Pat Hingle) was an ex-F.B.I. agent with enough connections in the security industry to get his son an entry-level job at the TRW plant just up the coast. Boyce swept floors and sorted mail and then, inexplicably, was handed a desk job with access to the Black Vault, holiest of holies in the intelligence system, where C.I.A. messages and military secrets were received and stored. Boyce learned about spy satellites and destabilization strategies, but it was not all cloak and dagger in the Vault. Much of the time he and his colleagues (a surly black Vietnam vet and a floozy secretary) partied and boozed among the secrets. Boyce's assignment was to bring in the makings of orange blossoms, peppermint schnapps and daiquiris to be blended in the paper-shredding machine.

Lee (Sean Penn) was the blustering, bragging son of a professionally important physician. He and Boyce had been altar boys at the local Catholic Church,

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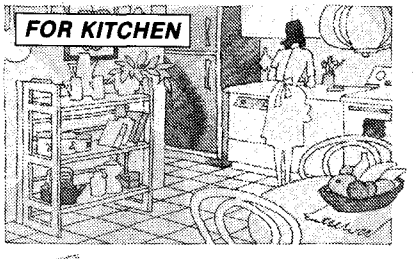

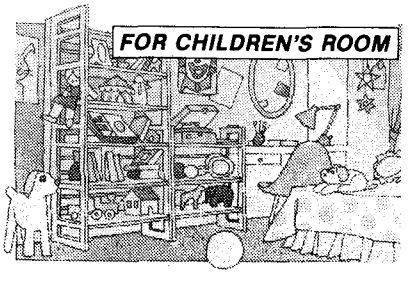

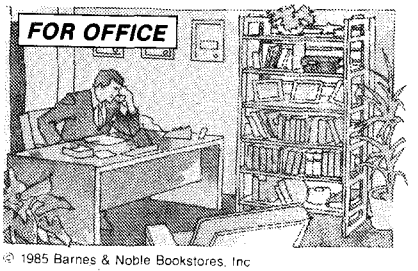

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but their falls from grace had taken the two into somewhat different pastimes. Boyce took up falconry; Lee dealt marijuana and cocaine. He also used a lot of both substances himself and drove fast sports cars along the cliffs of the coast. Sometimes he drove them into stationary objects or other cars.

Boyce's systemic alienation was not assuaged by a steady job, and his discomfort in the American wasteland was hardly eased by what he heard in the Vault. Not only was his country spying in space, but it appeared that the C.I.A. had overthrown the leftish government of Prime Minister Gough Whitlam in Australia because Whitlam refused to cooperate in joint intelligence operations. Just at that fortuitous point Lee was a fugitive from bail in a coke bust, and the two old altar boys teamed up to betray their country and make some cash. Boyce gave Lee a briefcaseful of TRW secrets and sent his friend to push them to the Russians in their Mexico City embassy.

The story of Lee's strung-out deals, Boyce's adventures in the Black Vault, the politics, the morality and the falconry was obviously the stuff of cinema, but its expression on the screen presented serious problems. First was Boyce himself, a blank antihero whose motivations were muddled and whose conscience was confused in that peculiarly California way. Was it that housing developments were destroying the range and habitat of wild birds? That there was no meaningful work left in Sun Belt America? That the church had failed to establish its moral legitimacy? That the government was run by liars and scoundrels? The director and screenwriter wanted to suggest all of the above, and they filled their movie with snippets and swatches of mid-1970s Americana to deliver the message: clips of the televised Watergate hearings, football cheerleaders, disco parties, consumption fetishism, barbecues, birding and drugging. Images, images: but no ideas to provide a framework.

Because blankness is so hard to convey, the filmmakers concentrated their best efforts on the rough-textured Lee, whose affect was as jagged as Boyce's was flat. In Lindsey's journalism, Lee is a scummy lout, weaselly but not bright, aggressive but not powerful. In Sean Penn's embodiment, Lee is enormously compelling for all his faults, and more interesting and more fun to watch than the simpering Boyce. Penn's presence as an actor—a star—is apparent from his first appearance, in profile, unspeaking, at a sleazy Mexican bar. Hutton has all he can do to stay on screen until the final scene. That's ordinary acting, but it's worse writing and directing.

The decision—by default or design—to elevate Lee over Boyce defeated the possibility of giving coherence to *The Falcon and the Snowman*. If this was to be a movie about America, it had to be Boyce's tale, a story of deformed dreams, twisted visions, partial insights and hopeless causes. The country may not be a political expression of Boyce's symbolic falcon but neither is it, or not yet, like Lee, a turkey. □

ART.

ARTHUR C. DANTO

De Kooning's Three-Seater

Charles Vanderveer 3d, the legendary auctioneer of the South Fork of Long Island, is a resourceful and in many ways an idealistic man. Given his relentless curiosity about the archeology of his region, it was inevitable that odds and ends from the kitchen middens of the Abstract Expressionist tribe, which settled in the area in the late 1940s, should turn up as collectibles in one or another of his auctions. Recently, however, he has acquired an object that puts enough pressure on the borderline between art works and curiosities to raise a question about the firmness of that borderline. Since the object is "by" Willem de Kooning, it seems somewhat urgent that the matter be resolved.

The philosophical question of separating art from everything else is given a certain comic turn in the present instance since the object at issue is a three-hole toilet seat from the period before Abstract Expressionists were in command of sufficient resources to afford running water. De Kooning did not so much paint the seat, in the way that a handyman might, as put paint on it, in a way that raises issues of connoisseurship. Yeats assures us through Crazy Jane that love has pitched his mansion in the place of excrement. If love has such a locus, why not art?

The question posed in the headline of *The New York Times* article that reported this find—"But Is it Art?"—has been raised at every stage of modern art since Impressionism, and doubtless it is made inevitable by the fact that the concept of art allows for revolution from within. Still, certain objects very like this one have made it across the border into museum space, and it was to be expected that someone would instantly draw an analogy between the de Kooning three-seater and one of the most controverted objects in the history of art, that urinal Duchamp titled "Fountain." "Fountain" was signed with the pseudonym R. Mutt and dated 1917, and was rejected by the hanging committee in the jury-free Independents Exhibition of that year, though it is unclear whether the grounds were that it was bad art or just not art at all. Certainly it has been enfranchised as art since, and though the "original" has been lost—it exists only in a photograph by Alfred Stieglitz—it may even today be kicking around someone's barn. Were Charles Vanderveer 3d to stumble upon it, he need have few worries about his children's tuition payments or, for that matter, his old age. Esthetically, however, the urinal's loss is not as important as it might seem, since the relationship between the work and the object is tenuous. Duchamp's work dates from 1917, but who knows when the urinal was made or by whom? De Kooning put paint on the privy seat in 1954, but the seat must have preceded the work—if it is a work—by a good many years. It was crafted by an itinerant carpenter, perhaps, a contemporary of Walt Whitman for all anyone knows.

Not far from the site of the seat stands the structure where, in the first warm days of 1947, Jackson Pollock, in de Kooning's own words, "broke the ice." This was one of the epochal gestures of modern art: flinging skeins of house paint across canvas placed on the floor. Like Duchamp's work, Pollock's was vindicated not only as art but as great art, but in 1947 Pollock himself was far from sure of its status. Barbara Rose cites a very moving memory of Lee Krasner's: "You know, Jackson used to grab me by the arm, shaking, and ask 'Is this a painting?' Not a good or bad painting—just was it a painting at all." By 1954 that question had been massively resolved, though problems might have been created if Pollock's dropcloths resembled his paintings drip for drip, or if he had flung paint at a field mouse because of his well-known irascibility. Pollock's style spread to the

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outer bounds of artistic consciousness with the speed of light, and even in nursery schools, children were soon flinging paint "to express themselves."

In painting the toilet seat, de Kooning used what *The Times* speaks of as "angry blobs of black paint reminiscent of the style used by Jackson Pollock, who frequently visited the de Koonings." It is plain that an art-historical reference and an in-joke is being transacted across the punctuated boards: de Kooning put the paint on in just a few minutes, according to Elaine de Kooning, who "authenticated" the object, for the further gaiety of a croquet party. Art-historical allusions on toilet seats by master painters must be exceedingly rare, so we are dealing with something beyond mere artifact. But, as the question goes, Is it art? And if it isn't, where is the line to be drawn between it and "Fountain," or any of those Pollockian arabesques?

Let me complicate the matter with an example that has some claim to kinship with "Fountain" and with the de Kooning privy. In my student days in Paris, I used to enjoy philosophical conversation with Alberto Giacometti, whose studio I got to know quite well. One part of it I remember vividly: Giacometti's water closet was outside, in the courtyard. It was of an old-fashioned sort known as a *vespasienne*, two footrests on either side of a hole. It was a lonely place, it now occurs to me, in comparison with the convivial three-holer of Long Island. In any case, Alberto used to draw while squatting, and the closet was covered with sketches as precious and precise as those in the caves at Altamira. At the time I wondered whether, in the event of Giacometti's death, it should be transported intact to the Musée d'Art Moderne. I was in New York when he died and I have no idea what happened to it, but even if I had been in Montparnasse, I doubt my first or even last thought would have been to ask what was to become of the water closet. Yet I am certain that the walls did bear works of art—if Giacometti drawings are works of art at all. They were products of a restless artistic consciousness coping with the inconveniences of the body. Their being there, in that private space, is perhaps an unintended comment on Yeats's beautiful line. Needless to say, were drawings done by Michelangelo under similar circumstances, there would be little question of their status.

The first thing to note, it seems to me, is that "But is it art?" cannot be asked of isolated objects. There is an implicit generalization in the question, which asks: is a thing of this *kind* a work of art? "Fountain," for example, was one of a class of ready-mades, commonplace objects transfigured into works of art through the acceptance of a theory. There would be questions about the scope and limitations of the theory, as well as questions about whether a given ready-made was good in its kind or bad, but the question of art had to be settled for the entire class. One may ask: What of the first ready-made? Well, even though there was only the single instance, the question of its kind was already settled, and the kind had a natural location in what Duchamp had already achieved as an artist. Also, "Fountain" made it possible for him to go on to the next kind of thing. Artistic kinds are like species, where the possibility of generation is a serious criterion. Much the same thing may be said of Pollock's paintings. They were enfranchised by a theory which evolved as the works evolved, and they fit in Pollock's corpus with what preceded them and what came next. As for Giacometti's water-closet drawings, there is no problem at all: they were examples of his mature style, placed on an unusual surface.

None of this applies to de Kooning's three-seater. The mock Pollockian marbling is isolated from everything that went before and came after; it has no place in the de Kooning corpus. Objects similar to it were to become accepted in the next generation of artists. Rauschenberg could easily have made a combine out of a paint-streaked privy stool. There are well-known works of his with which this could have fitted: bedclothes, for example, streaked and smeared with house paint and hung on the wall. Critics and curators adore the language of anticipation, but it would be as inane as the principle that generates major exhibitions at the Museum of Modern Art to say that de Kooning was ahead of his time, that his privy anticipated the kind of works that were to supersede Abstract Expressionism, or that there was an affinity between Vanderveer's acquisition and—excuse me—a Johns. Perhaps de Kooning could have evolved in this direction, but he did not, and there is no space in his corpus for an object of 1954 like this. The great art historian Heinrich Wölfflin said, "Not everything is possible at every time." I incline to the view that Johns and Rauschenberg were not possible in 1954, and it would not be possible for this to have been a de Kooning at any time. The corpus is closed.

So here is my thought: this particular object can be a work of art only if it is a de Kooning, and there is no way it can be that; so it's not a work of art. Neither, in compensation, is a sheet of drawings done for an illiterate servant by Michelangelo, illustrating what he wanted for a meal: two rolls, some fish, etc. Nobody is going to throw that illuminated menu away, as there are more reasons for keeping things than that they are works of art. And this, I dare say, will be the case with the three-seater. It has some archeological interest as a reminder of *la vie de bohème* led by artists near Amagansett before they all became famous. Not even de Kooning has the Midas touch, turning everything his brush comes in contact with into the gold of art. It is not just that the intention is lacking here; the requisite intention could not have been formed, because of historical circumstance. Of course I am not saying what it is worth. I imagine it will go for a pretty price, just because collectors will be afraid not to purchase it. □

DANCE.

MINDY ALOFF

Early last month at the Marymount Manhattan Theater, Sally Hess, a dancer I admire, performed *Garden Lilacs*, a modest though sharply focused solo by Remy Charlip. I'd seen her in the piece before, but not on a proper stage, and I was enchanted by how different the dance looked. The first part of *Garden Lilacs* is performed in silence; suddenly, a soprano voice, rather smothering and a degree sour, sings, "We'll gather lilacs in the spring again." Just then, Charlip throws in one of his fairy-tale surprises: a sprig of white lilac pops from the tips of the soloist's naked fingers and, invisibly secured, remains there, reverberating to her gestures. The sprig serves, for all intents and purposes, as her partner, and its appearance is the one dramatic event in this lyrical little dance. At Marymount, I looked forward to the moment so keenly that I

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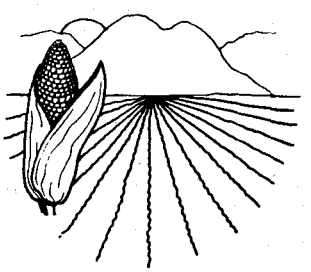

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came to notice subtleties in the silent part: a section of long ripples in the diaphragm as the dancer stood in a slight plié, a tingling cadenza for several fingers elevated overhead. In many various rhythms, the dance rehearsed for the appearance of the lilacs. When the flowers finally arrived, fully formed, on one explosive count, the moment seemed to fix its fugitive antecedents. A spare image, but it evoked a whole bouquet of feelings—glee, wistfulness, even a twist of regret. At the art of making mountains from molehills, Charlip is a master.

No matter how powerful or evocative a dance image may be on its own, its impact on an audience depends on rhythmic context—on how it fits into a pattern of motion and rest. Without a firm control over the way secondary images are measured off, even the most talented choreographer can end up merely marking time between dramatic peaks. Two recent works that fall short in this respect are Peter Martins's new trio, *Poulenc Sonata*, at the New York City Ballet, and Gail Conrad's recent piece *Beyond the Bases* ("A baseball fantasy in four parts"), presented as part of her Tap Dance Theater's January program at Marymount Manhattan.

Poulenc has been applauded as Martins's breakthrough, his best piece since his very first, *Calcium Light Night*, of 1977; but seen together on the same program, the two works don't compare so well. *Calcium* takes fewer dance ideas and explores them with more certainty and detachment. It uses repetition for patterning and, as Balanchine and Petipa often use it, for legibility. (To underline a particular step or look, those choreographers repeat it several times at equal intervals from slightly different points of view, as a key phrase might be repeated with variations in oral poetry.) *Poulenc* includes a number of startling moments, but they aren't fitted clearly into the general flow. Perhaps the vague momentum and anxious timing owe something to the piece's frankly dramatic agenda. Kyra Nichols, who plays a figure troubled by conflicting internal forces, meets those forces embodied in two men, a solicitous and potentially overpowering partner (Alexandre Proia) and an independent mirror image of herself (Christopher d'Amboise). Although it's good to see Martins expand his complicated imaginative world, the dancing seems subservient to the ideas about the characters. There are too many passages in this ballet, as there are in *A Schubertiad*, that look as if Martins began with a climactic gesture and jury-rigged the transition to fit instead of discovering the drama in the course of measuring out the steps.

Poulenc is set to a prickly sonata for two pianos which turns a little ingratiating for my taste but which does offer firm rhythmic support. Although Martins is obedient to the meter of the score, he keeps pointing away from the spirit of it, so that we don't get to know the music from the inside; it remains a butler to the choreography. This is partly because of the dance's reticence at asserting a distinct rhythm that could meet that of the music as an equal. Martins is a brilliant analyst of dancers, and the roles he has given his cast are, as usual, extremely flattering to their technical strengths. But the more flattering he is, the further he gets from the unique orneriness and measure that gave him his early promise.

Gail Conrad's *Beyond the Bases* also has a narrative agenda: three men (Dennis Gingery, David Parker, Tony Scopino) relive their youth in a game of sandlot baseball by day, while by night three "baseball shadows" (Heather Cornell, Diane Kay Johnson, Kathryn Tufano) strut through center field. The situation is static because the men and the shadows never interact in a way that changes them, though they could have enjoyed all kinds of confrontation through tapping. Conrad herself has taught us that two dancers can be connected in unexpected ways through rhythmic dialogue conducted from opposing stage corners. In *Red Skies*, a new storyless piece for herself and most of her company, individuals are linked through counterpoint and long rests; in the 1983 *Waterfront*, another group piece, the shapes adopted and mirrored by various dancers are played against their different personalities as expressed in sound.

Conrad is fond of splintered allusions and enigmatic endings, which give her work its uncompromisingly ironic tone. *Beyond the Bases*, which seems to be groping for some sort of heartfelt expression, is stifled, perhaps, by that irony. I also wish that Conrad, so intellectual in her imagery, was more discriminating in her repertory of sounds. Everything is delivered in a hammer-

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ing monotone, and after a time the din can be hard to take. Last spring Peggy Spina, another New York City tap dancer, gave a concert at Marymount in which the rhythms and sound colors were almost as various as those of a human voice. There were moments in Conrad's performance when I longed for that finesse.

There is no better sampler of supreme rhythmic mastery in choreography than the 101 ways Balanchine treats the polonaise. In February, one could catch his dense and highly sprung academic version of the dance at the end of *Tchaikovsky Suite No. 3*, and his airy, hide-and-seek games with scale in the children's polonaise of *Harlequinade*. Set in triple time, the polonaise is really a processional, a walk for the purpose of display, and in its original ballroom form it already incorporated the many elements of design and suspense that Balanchine's genius exploited. In January, the wonderful Mazowsze Polish folk dance company performed a basic polonaise as part of its Carnegie Hall program, and its pure, clear-cut rendition was as refreshing as a glass of spring water. In fact, these handsome people—dressed in the finest and most flattering costumes one is likely to find in any folk dance company—were remarkable in everything they did. The dances were attractively arranged and studded with small charms, and the dancers had been encouraged to perform them with strength and grace. The Mazowsze was founded in 1948 by Tadeusz Sygietynski, a composer and Polish folklorist, and his wife, actress and designer Mira Ziminska. Their work is a testament to accuracy and taste. □

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MERCHANDISE

"NO MORE! No Vietnam War in Central America!" The background of this poster, a military coffin and the inscription "No More" originated during the Vietnam War and was widely circulated. Now the well-known artist Sam Wiener, angered by the Reagan Administration's war efforts in Central America, has forcefully expressed his outrage by splashing a fiery-red protest over the original. The posters, measuring 24½ by 19½ inches, are printed in three colors on high-gloss paper. They are available for $4 each, plus $1 for postage. (Orders of 5 or more are available for $3 per poster plus postage. Please inquire for special discounts on large quantity bulk orders.) Make checks payable to The Nation, and send to: The Nation, "No More," 72 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10011.

THE ROSENBERG DEBATE TAPES. The historic debate, "Were the Rosenbergs Framed?" sponsored by The Nation and The New Republic at Town Hall on October 20, can now be purchased in typed transcript and/or cassette tape form. Complete transcripts are available for $24 each; tape cassettes are $19 each. Special discounts are available on orders of five or more. Send check or mail order payable to The Nation to: "Rosenbergs," The Nation, 72 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10011. If you'd like more information, call (212) 242-8400. (A project of The Nation Institute.)

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MAGAZINE EDITOR. Duties: solicit, edit, lay out, paste up articles for quarterly magazine. Solicit ads and subscriptions. Work with editorial board and volunteers. Requirements: writing, editing, production, organizing skills. Familiarity with peace movement. Twenty-five hours per week, $125 weekly plus benefits. Application deadline March 17.

Both positions require a commitment to M.F.S. goals—zero nuclear weapons, ban nuclear power, reverse the arms race, meeting human needs. Send resume and cover letter, indicating position desired, to: Personnel, M.F.S., 853 Broadway, Rm. 418, New York, NY 10003.

For the convenience of those who wish to place a classified notice in *THE NATION:*

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Take advantage of our special offer: place an order for three insertions of your ad, and we will print a fourth insertion free!

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DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT. Boston-based national organization founded by Dr. Helen Caldicott seeks Director of Development to coordinate budget, foundation funding, membership development, direct mail solicitation and special events. Experience required. Competitive salary range. Resumes: WOMEN'S ACTION FOR NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT, Box 153, New Town Branch, Boston, MA 02258.

THE NATION INSTITUTE needs a part-time typist on a regular basis. Approximately 10 hours a week. Pay on the low side, interesting projects. Please contact Emily Sack at (212) 242-8400.

POSITIONS DESIRED

TONS OF RESEARCH—no time to do it? If that's your headache, call on a former Nation intern, experienced in research/fact-checking/proofreading. Call Ben Spier at (212) 316-1117.

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TECHNOCRACY-TECHNOLOGICAL SOCIAL DESIGN available for $2 from Technocracy Inc., Continental Headquarters, Savannah, OH 44874.

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JESUS NONFICTIONAL! Historical evidence proves Resurrection of Christ! $4, Beckerle, Box 33006, Northglenn, CO 80233.

TRAVEL

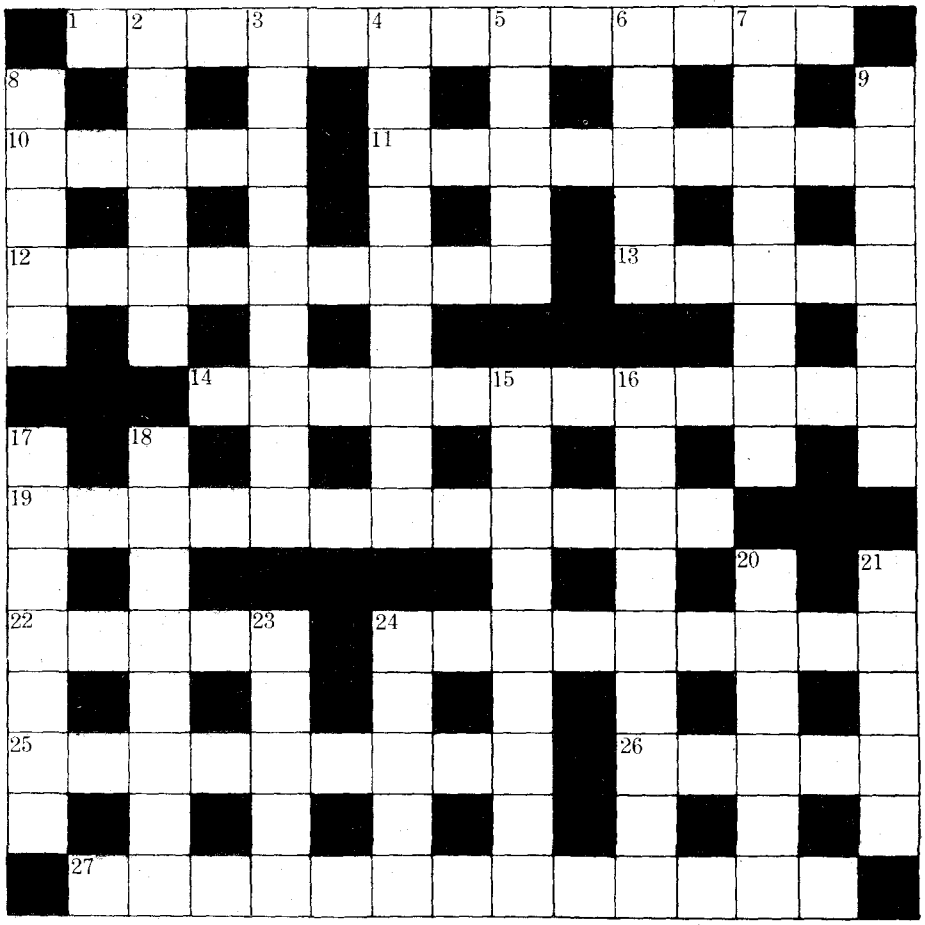
NICARAGUA. Come to observe, support peace and nonintervention or to demonstrate solidarity. One-week trip delegations leaving from Los Angeles May, June, July, August. Information: Alice McGrath, Office of the Americas, 1227 Fourth Street, Santa Monica, CA 90401.

SOLUTION TO PUZZLE NO. 2045

O	F	T	H	E	■	C	A	B	D	R	I	V	E	R
F	■	A	■	N	■	A	■	U	■	A	■	E	■	E
F	O	X	H	O	U	N	D	S	■	B	O	R	E	S
S	■	I	■	U	■	T	■	I	■	E	■	B	■	O
E	V	E	R	G	R	E	E	N	■	L	E	A	R	N
T	■	S	■	H	■	R	■	E	■	A	■	T	■	A
■	■	■	■	■	A	B	Y	S	S	I	N	I	A	N
C	■	E	■	A	■	U	■	S	■	S	■	M	■	T
A	R	M	E	D	T	R	U	C	E	■	■	■	■	■
E	■	P	■	A	■	Y	■	O	■	P	■	U	■	M
S	A	L	E	M	■	T	U	L	A	R	E	M	I	A
A	■	A	■	B	■	A	■	L	■	I	■	L	■	S
R	A	N	G	E	■	L	I	E	I	N	W	A	I	T
E	■	E	■	D	■	E	■	G	■	T	■	U	■	E
A	D	D	R	E	S	S	E	E	■	S	A	T	Y	R

Crossword Puzzle No. 2046

FRANK W. LEWIS



ACROSS

1 See! Oh, oh! That's what makes pop pop! (6,7)
10 If you fiddle with your work, you might have one, but the carpet is in first-class condition. (5)
11 With a broken leg, Arabic translation implies there might be a lot of X's in such writing. (9)
12 Well, it shouldn't be much more than 100, though! (If so, you couldn't say 16.) (9)
13 The local type might be put into a story. (5)
14 Heaven and hell—they're useful if you want to avoid the inclination. (6,6)
19 Honest hearts, although broken, might sit beside them. (12)
22 By the sound of it, lets a lot of water out of the vegetables. (5)
24 That's where climbers might go, if the trace is as difficult. (9)
25 What you hear from here might sound like him. (5,4)
26 Openings for such as a revolutionary general? (5)
27 Study the standard food supply, perhaps, in case of fire. (13)

DOWN

2 A couple of articles on the record, according to one kind of computer. (6)
3 Bad for the driver, implying an old dog, perhaps. (5,4)
4 Tidy flocks, or their keepers? (9)
5 Got in the bar, head to foot. (5)
6 Has one more spar than 15, in the Mediterranean. (5)
7 Kipling implied the female was, as a species. (8)
8 Such dramatic tales are for children! (They're supposed to be innocent!) (5)
9 In part, she might be good, but sort of 24 across when not A 1. (7)
15 One of those ships no man can serve? (3-6)
16 Evidently has the oculist's O.K. in the Army. (4,5)
17 Carroll's girl goes to church, bearing a cup. (7)
18 A look E.C.M. has, in a way, being part of the Italian scenery. (4,4)
20 A bunch of actors, or wrongly applied as a head of state. (6)
21 Although it might be the answer to a rising problem, it's yet as different as it can be. (5)
23 More than one 27 is coming up, possibly finishing off a stroke. (5)
24 Biological aperture—a most awkward construction. (5)

PUZZLED?

No more cross words. Find out why "little skipper" is a "truant." Send for a free copy of Frank W. Lewis's Ground Rules to *The Nation*, 72 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10011.

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NUCLEAR SECRECY AND THE RIGHT TO KNOW

Secrecy Is Incompatible With Democracy

In a special dispatch from Washington, D.C. The New York Times on Feb. 13 disclosed that the Reagan Administration has had "contingency plans to deploy nuclear weapons in Canada, Iceland, Bermuda and Puerto Rico." On Feb. 14 the Times revealed that these plans also included the Azores Islands of Portugal in the Atlantic, the Philippines, Spain and the British Island of Diego Garcia in the Indian Ocean. The very listing of the eight locations concerned makes the whole business seem both dangerous and absurd.

More important, none of the governments involved even knew about the existence of these plans, which could prove a grave threat to their peoples. With regard to Puerto Rico, the contingency plans jeopardize the 1967 commitment of the U.S. when she signed the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America.

Since the American people knew nothing about this scandalous, secret and hide-and-seek nuclear game perpetrated by the Pentagon and President Reagan, the public's right to know, a basic civil liberty, has once again been violated.

Corliss Lamont, *Chairperson*
Edith Tiger, *Director*
Leonard B. Boudin, *General Counsel*

National Emergency Civil Liberties Committee

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